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THE OTHER LIFE

BY THE

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TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED FROM THE ELEVENTH EDITION OF THE GERMAN ORIGINAL

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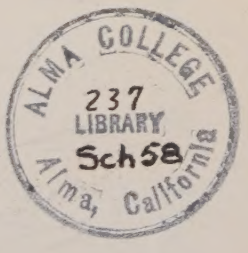

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INTRODUCTION

From the Preface to the Eleventh Edition of the Original

By BISHOP P. W. VON KEPPLER

BISHOP SCHNEIDER having died in 1909 I have been asked by his friends to undertake the preparation of a new edition now required of his book. Looking over the tenth edition I become convinced that no revision is needed, nor any important additions and corrections, and that respect for the dead will in this case rightly constrain me to publish unaltered the author's best literary bequest. Since the appearance of the first edition in 1879, the author himself, with the greatest care and devotion, has repeatedly revised, corrected, and added to the book, so that the tenth edition is a thoroughly mature work, quite up to date and perfect in the fundamental opinions that it expresses. I have gladly refrained from exercising my right of adopting a different standpoint on a few questions of minor importance, and I can restrict myself to the task of saying a few words by way of introduction to the eleventh edition.

As I perused this *Divina Commedia* in prose, I remembered again and again the words uttered by Möhler on his death-bed: "Ah, now I have seen it, now I know it, now I could write a book — and such a book it would be, but, alas, it is too late." If the late Bishop could prepare this new edition himself, after passing through the portals of death, and having entered the everlasting kingdom that lies beyond, what light indeed he could throw on the very mysteries which he here attempted most reverently to elucidate, as well as human science and divine faith will permit.

We have here a great and important work. Bishop Schneider conceived the happy and excellent idea of examining Catholic truth on the subject of those momentous questions which in every age have suggested themselves to man as he gazed with hope, longing, with lamentations and mourning, on the Other

Life, although those who have no faith turn away from these questions in fear and loathing. The author aimed at showing that the answers supplied to these questions by the Catholic religion are true and trustworthy. The more thoroughly non-believers examine and realize the firmness and the foundation of the Christian belief in the Other Life, and the comfort that this belief affords, the more clearly must they see that it is not merely a beautiful thought, but an actual part of the Christian's life.

The work is intended, therefore, not only to console us when thoughts of death, or the memories of our dead, hover about us, or when death invades our homes, but it is a book that wonderfully confirms and enlightens our faith in God and in immortality. It is the work of a scholar and philosopher, but also that of a priest and bishop. It is a classical interweaving of safe speculation and meditation, of sound faith and knowledge, of approved scholasticism and mysticism. Our admiration of this beautiful book makes us profoundly sorrowful of the author's early death, but he himself, in this book, offers proper consolation in our sorrow, and depicts in moving terms the delight of meeting again. He reminds us that the bond of love, that death cannot break, will assuredly be safeguarded in the future, if only we cling to it and bind it fast to our hearts by means of works of charity, applied to those who have for "a little while" vanished from our sight.

Surely this zealous advocate of the holy souls may rightly expect his readers to offer a pious and grateful *Requiem aeternam* for his soul, that may still be detained in Purgatory. We may hope, however, that his soul has already been admitted to the ranks of the Blessed and to the bliss of the Beatific Vision.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE REGARDING REFERENCES.

The German original is replete with references to works in foreign languages, the author having with great care mentioned title and page whenever quoting an author. In this English version titles and pages are invariably quoted of works that appeared in the English language, originally or in translation, but references to some of the works in other languages have been omitted whenever they were thought to needlessly encumber a book for English readers.

Those interested in these foreign works will find them fully quoted in the German original.

THE OTHER LIFE

CHAPTER I

CHRISTIAN AND PAGAN VIEWS OF LIFE AND DEATH

DEATH is a law of nature, say the philosophers, whereas modern biology asserts that it is not a defect of necessity inherent in organic life, which, they claim, possesses the faculty to continue the rotation of waste and repair forever, with undiminished force. At a congress of biologists and physicians at Vienna, in 1881, an eminent scholar of the Darwinian school declared death to be merely a phenomenon of adaptation, and not a process inseparable from life. He thought that life, if indefinitely prolonged, had come to be considered a superfluous luxury, and consequently, in the course of natural evolution, the necessity of death had been developed, or established.

Such theories do not prevent mankind from looking upon death as inevitable, nor from dreading it as a force that threatens destruction. Socrates said that the sum and substance of the world's philosophy was anxiety about death. Hence the mistake of supposing that by banishing the thought of death one may escape the fear of it. On the contrary, it is part of wisdom to give heed at an early stage of life to Abraham á Santa Clara, who warns us : "O man, hearken to this lamentation, proclaim and make it known to all and in every place: Death comes to every man, not *perhaps,* but a certainty: when, where and how you will die, none can tell, but that you *must* die is certain."

The mightiest ruler on earth is not to be sought among the potentates who exercise sway over land and sea, who give laws to nations, hold court over their fellow men, fight battles, and heap up in their palaces precious treasures; no, all they are the unwilling subjects of a greater master, who is feared by all, and

himself respects no man. Heroes who have valiantly faced many dangers, often quake at the sound of his name, and when he approaches, they shrink from him in terror. Those accustomed to command, meekly obey his behest; those who cringe to no mortal on earth yield to him; those enthroned in state, fall prostrate before him. Unbidden and unannounced he appears in the presence of the mighty; no sentry challenges him as he comes silently and demands admission. Armies cannot hinder his approach. He makes his way to the bedside of the mighty and no attendant dares to dispute his privilege. All shrink from him, all grow pale as he draws nigh: he has but to whisper the summons and their strength fails them and they invariably fall his victims. Some hear the summons as they work, others as they rest. The one he surprises in the home, another in the street or market place; there are those who receive the call in the midst of a cheerful gathering, and forthwith they leave their gay companions and follow the dreaded despot. To some his cry comes in the morning, to others at noon, many he overtakes in the evening or at night. There may be warning of his approach, not seldom he comes suddenly. He cares naught for rank and honors; prince or beggar, millionaire or pauper, the aged and the youthful, they all are his prey. He heeds not tears and lamentations, nor prayers for delay. A father may cry in anguish: "If I am taken, who will provide for my children?" but the dread visitor points toward heaven and answers calmly, "Leave them to Another's care," and the man must go.

And who is this all-powerful, inexorable, supreme arbiter of life? His name is Death.

When with death there has come the end of your life, there has also come the end of the part you played in life. You must quit this world and pass into the region where for thousands of years all the members of the human race have been assembling, where there is but one Lord and Judge, and this Lord and Judge is GOD. Nothing can exempt us from this inexorable necessity, neither youth, virtue, nor learning; neither rank, power, nor strength. The fairest flower of life must fade, the pride of life is brought low, the exalted are abased, the mighty must fall: Death plays no favorites. Each living creature carries in him the germ of destruction, a parasite that preys on him, and that will ultimately overpower him. High and low,

rich and poor, the learned and the ignorant, — all alike are treading the path that leads to the grave.

The grave means equality for all. King and beggar, both are swallowed by the grave which knows no distinction. There the tyrant rests in common with his victim; there the miser is reduced to poverty; his hand that once amassed heaps of gold, is now as empty as that which but clutched a few pence. The grave is the silent world where there is nothing to distinguish the happy from the miserable, the high-born from the lowly; even though the ostentation of survivors may dare to disturb by pretentious display the solemn peace of this consecrated place, where all vanity finds its end. The ashes of a burnt tree do not tell us whether the tree was well grown or stunted, beautiful or ugly, a stately oak or an humble hemlock.

The death sentence, invisibly inscribed on every human brow, is in the case of one carried into execution early, in that of another late; but even the longest reprieve comes soon to an end. A really normal death resembles the gradual flickering out of a lamp, when the oil is exhausted. The vital force fails little by little, until it finally collapses. But this is not the usual form death takes: we do not all live to a ripe old age, and as a rule death is the result of a sudden, violent disturbance, that consumes the vital force which would otherwise have sufficed for many years to come. "Man . . . cometh forth like a flower and is destroyed" (Job xiv. 2). "As a watch in the night, as things that are counted nothing, shall their years be. In the morning man shall grow up like grass; in the morning he shall flourish and pass away; in the evening he shall fall, grow dry and wither" (Ps. lxxxix. 4–6). Many an infant breathes once and never again, it passes directly from the bosom of its living mother to the bosom of mother earth: joyous lullabies are often followed quickly by cries of lamentation. However long a life may be, each year is made up of days, passing in rapid succession. "All our days are spent . . . our years shall be considered as a spider" (Ps. lxxxix. 9).

Our life on earth is like a shadow, that passes away and leaves no trace. For a brief time we behold the world, then we are seen no more, and the place, where we dwelt, forgets us. Too soon there will come death, burial, and decay. This fact is proclaimed by the voice of all nature, by the alternation

of seasons, by the rising and setting of the sun, by the flower of the field and by the grass of the meadow. The sum of the days allotted to us is soon complete; swifter than sound, more fleeting than light, the moments pass by. Our life is like the day in which noon follows fast on daybreak, and night follows even more quickly the noontide.

Generations have come and gone, and our own generation will in due course give place to another. The various ailments to which we are liable are reminders that we, like our ancestors, must die; the child grows up to maturity, and when his course is run he dies. This order is in constant operation. To-day *you* may be called: to-morrow is *my* turn. The young *may* die, the old *must* die, with equal facility death claims the new-born infant who has scarcely breathed, the youth in the flower of his strength, the mature in the prime of life, the aged, weighed down by the burden of years.

Most men think of death with fear. Few care to discuss it. The philosopher regards death as the final problem of life; the poet attempts a glance at it, but hastily averts his gaze. Greek artists have depicted Death as a beautiful youth, kissing away the last breath from the lips of the dying, but he is more often represented as a ghastly skeleton, armed with a scythe, and bearing just enough resemblance to the human form to fill us with horror and repugnance. Since all mankind shudders at the thought of death, how can he be fair, lovable and attractive? We may speak of the majesty of Death, but to the *bodily* eye it is the majesty of the king of horrors. Daily experience demonstrates that even the aged desire death to delay his coming, although their increasing infirmities seem to rob them of all enjoyment of life. Can we say that this clinging to an existence seemingly devoid of all value must be ascribed to senile weakness, must be regarded as an inevitable result of the fact that, all external pleasures having vanished, the weakened mind grows more self-centred, and eagerly seeks comfort in the pale glow of the dying fires within? A weary laborer is glad to lie down to rest at night, the traveller rejoices when a long and perilous voyage is over, and by the same reasoning, one might expect that those, who have nothing more in the world to hope or live for, would long for the other life, after having so long suffered and battled and toiled on this side of the grave. We are apt,

however, to underestimate the force of man's natural fear of death, and we must not judge an old man's love of life in the light of the views of a man full of strength and energy. We must not look upon his clinging to life as a weakness, even though he seems to live only in the memories of the past. The traveller who has safely crossed the stormy, treacherous ocean is no longer frightened by the turbulent seas, and thus one who has traversed the turmoil of a long life, now calmly and dispassionately faces the things that once enthralled his senses and aroused his emotions. He has severed the manifold bonds that drew him this way and that, and with a serene smile he looks back on the glamor of the world, that has now become powerless to disturb him. Life and its forms appear to him like the figures on a chess-board, with the game over and victory won. It resembles a dream, which is robbed by the approach of the dawn of light of all power to disturb and perplex the mind. In consequence of this mental detachment and peaceful rest the contemplation of the world around becomes a pure delight and a source of inward gratification, without exacting a price to be paid in violent emotions.

Just as there are young men who are blasé and weary of life, so there are old men full of youthful energy, whose existence cannot be regarded as worthless merely because it is so calm and devoid of outward manifestations. One great advantage of old age is the detachment of mind, which enables an old man in his retirement to reflect, and sometimes to formulate great thoughts which may result in great achievements of posterity. He is self-sufficient: the fruit of an experience gained by a life of labor, struggle and suffering. As Bogumil Goltz puts it, "Every thought, every perception is in him an association of history and experience, stored in the secret chamber of his heart, as an occasion of joy or sorrow, anxiety or necessity, poverty and toil. His moments have connection both with the future and the past . . . and thus from emotions, memories, faith, love, devotion, and thoughts of eternity, a temperament is formed, to which, like to a touchstone, the old man refers all the affairs and episodes of his life." Although such an existence seems to have reached its close and to be on the verge of eternity, yet we have not the right to smile contemptuously at one who still values life and strives to prolong it.

In accordance with the fact that life in its ordinary course resembles a tragedy, rather than a comedy, so the curtain invariably rings down upon an appalling *finis* of woe. Though life may have been favored with fortune and worldly honors, or spent in an uninterrupted round of pleasure, it must nevertheless terminate in death. With tears a man takes leave of this world, and tears he leaves behind. Try as we may to banish the thought of death, it will not down, and however stoutly we combat our fears, we cannot completely overcome them. No separation is so bitter as that of the soul from the body. When we die, we must forsake everything we have loved and cherished on earth, and hence the pang of grief naturally accompanies the thought of death.

When we stand by the death-bed of a dear relative or friend, we realize more vividly than ever before, both the terrors of death and the meaning of the words: "Remember, man, that dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return." We shudder when the icy hand is laid on one whose life is bound up with our own, when one is torn away who is united with us by the closest ties. "Doth bitter death separate in this manner?" (1 Kings xv. 32). "O Death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee" (Ecclus xli. 1). In such moments we perceive the invincible power of death; we seem to sense the sweep of his scythe close beside us. Nothing stays him in his cruel task, and with remorseless zeal he accomplishes it, in spite of our protest and supplication. And behold his work upon the objects of our most intense affection! He leaves desolation and sorrow in the circle of family and friends; he makes a wide breach in the bulwark set by God's tender providence around our temporal happiness. We are alone in our bitter sorrow, bereft of one who has been our protector in danger, our support in time of need, our comfort in distress. The very sight of a dead body, as it lies rigid and motionless, awaiting its interment, fills us with horror. Soon we shall consign to its last quiet resting-place what was once the magnificent abode of a soul whom we loved. The master-piece of visible creation, adorned with great charm and beauty, now moulders into dust. Gone are the beloved features that assured us of affection and kindness, the eyes that smiled upon us with so much tenderness, the hands always ready for kindly acts.

On an occasion such as this, having buried one who was most dear to us, we have recourse more eagerly than ever to *reason* and *faith,* hoping thus to discover a light amidst the darkness that surrounds us.

There are those wishing to comfort us by reasoning that "earth to earth" is the way of all flesh, and that none must complain of being made to share the lot of things earthly. According to a law that knows no exceptions every man born into the world must again leave it. At the very moment when life is given us, we also receive our death sentence, as if to live were a crime punishable with death. Life is given us on condition that we surrender it again; life will dwell within us only if we harbor at the same time its inseparable companion, Death. A candle cannot burn without being consumed; no sooner does it begin to shed its light than it begins to waste away, and in the same way the light of life dwindles as soon as it is kindled. When the heart beats for the first time, the arrow of death is lunged at it out of the realm of eternity, and when the arrow reaches its mark, the heart stops beating. We all are mortal; and because we live, we must die. Why struggle against this destiny? Why murmur if a sinister power, that spares no one, slays a dear member of our own circle? The same fate is in store for us, and reason bids us endure calmly and courageously whatever evils we are unable to modify or avert. "Think not with loathing of death," says the Stoic emperor, Marcus Aurelius, "but accept it readily as one of the things in which the will of nature is expressed. It is as natural for us to die as for a child to grow up, to reach manhood and advance to old age: all are processes natural to the various stages of life. Hence it is the duty of an intelligent man to think of death neither with indifference nor with violent emotion, but to regard it like any other natural process."

In order to rob death of its horrors, others view it in its aspect as a gradual process from the fullness of life to its dissolution. Death, they say, is properly introduced, preparations are made for his approach. It is a blow, but I am warned, and thus the sting of the blow is easily borne. The warning is given by life itself, as in fact every fresh stage in our existence involves the death of the previous stage. Obviously such an apology for death has as little power to reconcile us with the

prospect of death as has the saying of Epicurus: "Only before death, and not at death, is death really death and painful. Death is so ghostly a being that he exists only when he is absent, and is absent when he is present." Yet this ghost overshadows our whole existence, and to us it is as real a being as life itself.

Another comforter reminds us that we Christians have less right than any one else to complain of man's universal doom, because we know the nature of the evil that brought death into the world. "By one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned" (Romans v. 12). St. John Chrysostom remarks that a man who has died has only paid his debt, and how, therefore, can that be a ground for sorrow? The debt is one that cannot be paid with money; it is an obligation laid even upon kings, and none are exempt on the score of virtue, wisdom, or power. It is to some extent consoling to know that the surrender of life is not only an act of obedience to a natural law, but also the discharge of a moral obligation to make some sort of reparation to God's justice, and this discharge of a duty may at the same time become a meritorious action. Why should we grieve at death? To die is to gain, as even the pagans believed. Shortly before his death, Socrates caused a cock to be sacrificed to Aesculapius, the god of health, as a thank-offering for his approaching deliverance from the malady of life, and from the prison of the body. Life is wretched and empty, and death puts an end to this misery and emptiness. It is well with the beloved dead; he has entered into everlasting peace, where he will rest in bliss from all his labors, sorrows, and sufferings.

To the mourner these words sound sensible, no doubt, but they offer but cold comfort to a broken heart. Moreover, they arouse feelings in the bereft that tend still further to diminish the value of life, to which the recent visitation of death has given a severe shock. "May I," he asks, "try to find comfort for my loss in the thought that, after all, life is not worth living? But such a thought would make my lot still harder. If to my sorrow is added discouragement, my plight will indeed be hopeless. What I am really in need of is something to brace my courage to live. My struggle for existence will be harder

because my helpmate has been taken away. I must be permitted to look upon death as a real evil, as a thing that cruelly robs me of a precious possession, that severs what God united and intended to remain inseparable. Death must teach me the full significance of life, and make me value every minute as a boon not to be thrown away, because once it has passed, it is gone forever."

Those who laud death one-sidedly seem to overlook the fact that they make life unattractive for the mourner, and offer no other consolation than an apathetic submission to the inevitable.

The old accusation that Christianity is hostile to life has recently been revived, and alone for this reason it is not advisable for us to applaud those who can see in this world naught but plague and affliction. Of course, if our view of life does not rise above earthly things, if we have no explanation of the problems that beset our present existence, then we may well prefer death to life, for in that case death is ever lurking in the background of our consciousness, embittering life and thwarting our desire to live, and life itself appears to us abounding in trials and disappointments.

> For who would bear the whips and scorns of time
> When he himself might his quietus make
> With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,
> To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
> But that the dread of something after death, —
> The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
> No traveller returns, — puzzles the will,
> And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
> Than fly to others that we know not of?
>
> SHAKESPEARE, *Hamlet*, III, 1.

However, a contempt of death that proceeds from a failure to appreciate bodily life at its true value is pagan, not Christian. Furthermore, any form of asceticism that aims at depreciating and destroying life is a misconception which Christianity has never acknowledged as a genuine fruit of its spirit. The pagans of old despised life and glorified self-destruction. And so there are modern pagans who boast of an indifference to death that is evidently the penalty for a reckless and immoral indulgence. Because Christianity bids us value the future above the present, the superficial reasoning of unbelievers accuse it of teaching men to hate life, and of being a religion that regards only the miseries of earth and the joys of heaven, and which conse-

quently holds aloof from all temporal affairs, whether they affect body or intellect. We see with sorrow how a vast number of people of every class and occupation despise as unworthy of this civilized age the unappreciated doctrines of Christianity, and hark back to the old but convenient pagan theories of life.

There is among these theories the view that happiness is possible only if a man casts aside all thought of to-morrow and rejoices in to-day; if he avoids spoiling his enjoyment of the present by anxiety about the future; if, free from all hopes and desires, he lives only for the moment, satisfied with what he has within his grasp. Only those who enjoy the pleasures of life can be said really to live; all others are dead, even though they seem to live. There is the other theory that it is really not worth while to aim at enjoyment of the present, since life at best is a bankrupt concern, in which the receipts will not cover the outlay. Hence non-existence is preferable to existence, and it is an act of highest wisdom to enter voluntarily into the blissful (?) state of nothingness; nevertheless, owing to a foolish clinging to life, we may make the best of it, and enjoy, as best we can, the pleasures of the moment. Both these schools of philosophy preach the doctrine of rational enjoyment of the things of sense, the former without giving a thought to the other world, which is for them devoid of all interest; the latter looking forward to a transposition after death into Nirvana, a condition, that is, of eternal unconsciousness which suits the physical, moral, and intellectual exhaustion of worldlings. Both schools of philosophy, however, join in a melancholy chorus lamenting the shortcomings and trials of human life.

Their wail is a condemnation of the philosophy of these worldlings, who seem to profess unbelief in order that they may do whatever they please. On the other hand, their lament bears witness to the truth of Christianity, which does not deny that life is full of sorrow, but enjoys the hope of a better life without diminishing the value of life in the world.

But does not Christianity insist upon mortification of the flesh, self-denial, control of bodily impulses, and a complete rejection of all the pleasures of life? Many people accuse Christianity of inculcating duties altogether opposed to happiness, and they add contemptuously that the prospect of heaven,

which is to offer compensation for the violent destruction and shortening of bodily life, is merely the exaltation of Nothing, and therefore is not a sufficiently strong motive to impel professing Christians to renounce earthly joys in the manner required of them. Teachers who misrepresent the Christian ideal; writers on ethics who misconceive Christian morality; and the vast number of Christians who care very much for earthly wealth and enjoyment, but very little for the acquisition of heavenly treasures, — these all furnish welcome substance for this charge against Christianity.

Edward Gibbon, E. Zeller, D. F. Strauss, W. E. H. Lecky, and many others, assert that in comparison with the simple unity of mind and sense in pre-Christian times Christianity is a one-sided spiritual force that takes no account of the external world. "The Greeks aimed at that beautiful unity of mind and nature which characterizes Greek ethics, but the Christian ideal is a kind of asceticism that raises a barrier between reason and sense. It sets up saints with a monastic spirit of indifference or apathy in the place of heroes who fought and enjoyed life" (Zeller). Hence pagan morality is regarded as superior to Christian morality. Apathy, however, whether it takes the form of Stoic insensibility, or Quietism, or Fatalism, is never a characteristic, far less an essential of Christian virtue. Christian piety is not a morbid obtuse condition nor is melancholia the mark of a genuine Christian. Those who maintain the contrary are ignorant of the earnestness with which the greatest Christian writers have spoken in defence of human inclinations and of passions that are duly controlled by reason. "If emotion controlled by reason is to be called sinful," says St. Augustine, "we may rightly describe as virtue what in reality is sin. If we have no feelings at all, we certainly do not live as we ought. In this vale of tears insensibility to pain is a benefit to be secured only at a cost that reduces man in body and soul to the level of a beast. If by apathy is meant freedom from emotions that are contrary to reason, and disturb the intellectual vision, then it is a true and desirable benefit. If, however, it is a state of insensibility, it is worse than any vice. In those who live according to the flesh and to self-imposed rules, sensations become evil passions; but a good life is governed by good emotions.

Occasionally we come across persons who profess to be superior to all emotions, but their pride is in direct proportion to their endeavor to avoid pain. Some in their unnatural vanity take credit to themselves for being influenced by no emotions whatever, but this shows them to be devoid of all humanity, and does not prove them to have attained to true peace of mind. A limb is not straight because it is immovable, nor is it healthy because it has no sensation" (*De Civit. Dei,* XIV, *c.* 9).

The views thus expressed by St. Augustine find their best justification in the life and teaching of Christ, in Whom every truly human quality was present, Who realized most perfectly the human ideal, and Who knew every noble emotion of the human heart. He loved nature and mankind, and was not opposed to the pure joys and true beauties of life. He rejoiced with the joyful and mourned with the sorrowful; He allowed St. John, His beloved disciple, to lean on His breast; He felt pity for the sick and hungry, and had mercy upon sinners; He wept over Jerusalem, and was indignant at those who desecrated the Temple. He was full of zeal and yet a lover of peace; an enthusiast, and yet calm, strong, both to will and to accomplish; a man both of speech and action, a model of both the contemplative and the active life. Those disposed to a dreamy unpractical kind of devotion He warned, saying, "Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matth. vii. 21). To those who sanctimoniously pleaded their good works He said, "Unless your justice abound more than that of the Pharisees, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matth. v. 20). He bade those who loved their ease to be strenuous in action, and those who attached undue importance to outward things to look at the inward motive: "it is the Spirit that quickeneth" (John vi. 64). The apostles preached the same doctrine, and insisted upon a faith which was both, animated by charity and active in good works.

The history of civilization proves the idea of "monastic apathy" to have no foundation in truth. The calm of a pure soul, enlightened by God, is a source of moral determination and energy, not of inactive brooding. A man who knows that his spiritual life is safe from the fluctuations and anxieties of

external things is more at liberty to take a bold step than is one whose mind is not at rest regarding his soul. Work is only one side of our moral advancement, and peace and inward recollection must be the complement of outward activity. Those who, remembering the words, "What doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?" (Matth. xvi. 26) spend hours in meditation, cannot fairly be charged with apathy. And men who value other things besides those pursued by the materialistic spirit of the age must regard the part of Mary no less than the zeal of Martha as a useful form of activity. The modern craving for gain esteems work only if it brings money, and is intolerant of those even who wish to devote the Christian Sabbath to their mental and physical recreation. How can they understand occupations and pursuits that have nothing to do with Mammon?

We must not find fault, of course, if our opponents laugh at those who spend their time in prayer only because they have a horror of work; who seek merely their own comfort in the service of God; who pretend a devotion to religion and at the same time oppress and defraud their fellow men. A satisfaction experienced in prayer and contemplation that is not inspired by hatred of sin and love of virtue is near akin to gross sensuality, and, like it, has an enervating effect, and actually induces unrighteousness. There is a base form of selfishness that hides itself under the cloak of piety, the better to achieve its ends without incurring censure; and one who judges without discrimination, guided only by outward appearances, quickly concludes that the spirituality of doctrine is made to agree with the sensuality of life, and that the rapture experienced in pious affections and enjoyment found in religious work offer ample compensation for the mortification that may attend them.

The Christian ideal of virtue and the means of attaining to it are incomprehensible to those who are unable to distinguish between nature and grace, between the worldly and spiritual life of the Christian. Christian self-denial is not self-negation; nor is overcoming the world the same thing as shunning the world; the state of perfection and the means of perfection are not convertible terms.

A Christian who conquers self and the world is as remote

from the worldly spirit of ancient and modern Epicureans as he is from the pessimism of men such as Heraclitus and Schopenhauer. He takes as his model not a Stoic, or a Quietist, nor the eastern fakir inflicting extraordinary hardships upon himself, but Christ, Whose steps we ought to follow, and Whom we must resemble if we are to share His glory. He alone is the perfect embodiment of sanctity and purity, and none has ever rivalled, or can ever rival, His perfection. Christ's example is hence only imperfectly followed even by the greatest saints, who have been conspicuous for the one or the other Christlike trait, but no one of whom is a model of all the virtues collectively. The example of many saints must be the object of our admiration rather than of our imitation, and we ought to copy, not so much the peculiar characteristic of some saint, but what is common to them all, viz. the fact that they brought our Lord's words and example to bear upon the circumstances of their own life. Whoever in his own sphere of action seeks to behave as Christ would have behaved under similar circumstances is truly a follower of Christ. As there are many roads to the one goal, there are many ways of following the same example; hence the saints differ among themselves in many respects. Christianity teaches unity, but it does not inculcate narrowness; it tolerates multiformity so long as it does not degenerate into deformity. All who are united with Christ in faith and love form one body, of which He is the Head. What would become of a body were all its limbs of the same shape, and bent upon performing the same function? It is just as essential for them to be different as it is necessary for them to have only one head. There are many gifts, but only one Lord, only one and the same Spirit, who distributes the gifts and regulates their harmonious action. He who as a living member of the Christian community discharges to the best of his ability the duties assigned to him, resembles Christ, and, as the apostle says, he is "a man of God" (1 Tim. vi. 11).

We cannot, however, become like Christ unless we practise spiritual and bodily mortification. To be rejected is in this connection the one-sided and ill-advised tendency, already condemned by St. Paul, which regards the body as a necessary evil, whose termination may be desired unconditionally and whose injurious effects are to be counteracted by weakening

the body. Indeed, this heresy disguised under the cloak of exalted virtue has as a rule led to grossest sensuality and has served as a warrant for shameful excesses. It views the body as a corrupt slave, uncontrollable by the soul, and for peace' sake to be abandoned to its animal instincts and lusts. This view, hostile to the proper valuation of life, is not yet extinct, and even on its better side it creates among Christians the wrong impression that true virtue and perfection are possible exclusively to those who have formally renounced the world; and that life in the world cannot rise beyond a bare compliance with duty and outward conformity with the law. True, it is the teaching of Christianity that everything earthly and temporal must be used to the attainment of what is heavenly and eternal; and therefore our bodily existence is not an aim in itself, but a means of attaining to spiritual growth and perfection. But to abandon the world with its achievements and joys is not possible in the case of every Christian, nor even permissible, far less requisite. A man honest in thought and deed will not find that life in the world is a hindrance to a striving after Christian perfection. He can amid his occupations follow Christ's example, do even good works that are counselled but not commanded by the divine law, and fulfil his duties in a manner exceeding the strict obligation. Spiritual independence of the world and its attractions, of the body and its needs, is within the reach of every man of good will. Moral perfection may often enough be acquired by those who have chosen the religious life, but they have no exclusive claim to it. Outward abandonment of the world does not in itself kill the spirit of worldliness; indeed, it is often coupled with it; and so, on the other hand, does life in the world not necessarily render a man worldly. True, no one can serve two masters, but there is here no twofold allegiance. Rather may we call it a single-hearted devotion to God's glory if Mammon is sought and employed only as a means of acquiring spiritual, moral, and heavenly benefits. Whoever subordinates the world with its joys, and the body with its faculties, to the service of God, is indeed seeking first the kingdom of God and His justice, and actually serving but one Master. Such service demands constant vigilance, strict morality, and a spirit of sacrifice, but it proves the falsity of the current opinion that heroic virtue can

be practised only in a quiet monastic cell, and not in the turmoil of the world. It was perhaps the greatest achievement of St. Francis of Sales to have broken down the mistaken distinction between the moral life in the world and that in the cloister. His works, and especially his "Devout Life," are of the utmost importance, since in them he effected a kind of reconciliation between world and Church. His elevation to the rank of *Doctor Ecclesiae* was an event very significant for Catholic doctrine.

Those gloomy moralists who delight in inveighing against the bodily life, instead of condemning merely its sins as John Tauler would have them do, would find themselves in a difficult position if they were taken at their word and called upon to substantiate their random utterances which make Christianity suspected as a religion involving hatred of the world and of life. Christianity teaches that it is our duty to preserve and value human life, that the body is not intended to be an oppressive burden, nor an unworthy bondage for the spirit, but rather its companion and helper during our earthly pilgrimage, destined for the performance of valuable and even indispensable services. The body enables the spirit to come into contact with nature, it guards the mind from soaring too high and falling too low; it is the instrument and means whereby the soul may attain perfection and gain imperishable merit. In the reception of the sacraments the body becomes a channel of grace, a temple of the Holy Ghost, and a member of Christ's body. In consequence of sin it is liable to death and corruption, but it will not remain forever the prey of the grave, but will rise in glory and be for all eternity reunited with the soul. For these reasons we owe reverence to the body even after the soul has left it; and even those who profess greatest contempt for the body would hardly wish such reverence to be wanting in their own case.

The body is not to be regarded as the cause and abode of evil, for it is the will that tolerates or calls forth forbidden desires. The enemy to be overcome is the tendency to sin that proceeds from sin and hinders the spirit from soaring to the divine and eternal, and that fetters it to the service of what is earthly and temporal. Concupiscence in its various forms cannot, of course, be rendered powerless without bodily mor-

tification. But mortification is not an end in itself, but a means for the conquest of sinful passions and for attaining to the resemblance of Christ; and it fails to accomplish its purpose as soon as it seriously endangers health, for a weak and sickly body, as compared with one full of vigor, is at a disadvantage in the moral and spiritual combat. Asceticism, when rightly understood and practised, actually contributes to physical health, and hence it is recommended and used even by those who aim exclusively at the welfare of the body.

Those who charge Christianity with a false view of asceticism, and with being inimical to life, remind us that many saints hated life, and treated the body not as the servant and helper of the soul, but maltreated it as a vicious slave; that they looked upon it not as a valuable trust, for the use of which they were answerable, but as a possession which they might waste and destroy as they chose. It is undeniable that many heroes of virtue were unduly harsh in the treatment of their bodies, condemning them thereby to premature debility. But we must not forget that some who did this subsequently repented and changed their mode of life, as, for example, St. Bernard did; and we need not hesitate to say of all of them that they attained to sanctity and canonization, not because of their excessive bodily mortification, but in spite of it.

Nothing is so completely opposed to the spirit of Christianity as a systematic contempt of life and an unconditional preference for death.

What, then, is death in the eyes of a Christian? Is it a benefit or an evil? Ask a soldier whether the end of a battle is to be regarded a misfortune or not. His reply will depend upon whether the battle has ended for him in victory or defeat. Life is a warfare, and death is the decisive engagement that ends either in victory and triumph, or in defeat and disgrace. Death is an evil if the union between soul and body is a good; and since this union is a peculiar and essential prerogative of human nature, therefore death is a true misfortune. But the union is not of itself and in every respect a good, but it is so only because the human soul is created and destined to inhabit a human body, and work in it. Hence a pure spirit, that has no need of a body in order to attain perfection, is of higher rank than a spirit made to dwell in a

body, and the former has no reason to envy the latter. Such a free spirit is not only able to accomplish its task, namely to act according to the moral law, more easily, but it is in the use of its intellect and freedom independent of conditions and circumstances liable to impede and thwart its cognition and will. Man, however, encounters obstacles of this kind, for "the corruptible body is a load upon the soul, and the earthly habitation presseth down the mind that museth upon many things" (Wisd. ix. 15). In this sense, therefore, the body may be regarded as a burden, as the prison of the soul, and death as a release, in the sense that it is the entrance of a soul into a state where it is untrammelled by the body, and into a more perfect existence. Pagan philosophers and poets often spoke of death as a deliverer, some because they despised bodily life and looked forward to a state of peace and immunity from pain in a shadowy future existence; and these thought it even permissible to put a voluntary end to this life. Others had the morbid idea that life, not death, was the penalty of sin, while there were those who considered the body to be the abode of evil, and believed the soul to be defiled by living in such a body.

There are passages in Holy Scripture and the Fathers which at first sight may be thought to resemble the pagan panegyrics of death, but a very different interpretation must be given them. St. Paul exclaims, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans vii. 24). "I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ" (Phil. i. 23). The same sentiment is expressed by St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. John Chrysostom, St. Bernard, and many others, but it is not prompted by any despairing contempt for life. They do not extol death and depreciate life; they value life as a preparation for death, but see in death the gate to a better life. What they desired was not a release from physical evils, but the deliverance from moral evils, from the occasion of sin that may endanger their salvation. Above all, their heart was set on the idea of final confirmation in God's grace and love. And they did not crave even this culmination of liberty from evil except with full submission to the will of Him Who has united soul and body in one nature, and Who reserves to Himself the right to separate them. As a general thing it is presumptuous to wish

or even pray for an abbreviation of one's life; only those may do this properly who are oppressed with the horror of sin and filled with the ardent desire for union with God. They may well hail with delight the hour when it will please Him to summon them from their earthly lodging to their heavenly home.

Death, considered more closely, is but a shadow, an idea that derives its meaning from some particular philosophy of existence, a picture that takes its outline and coloring from our view and way of life, and from the thought of what lies beyond the grave. Christianity regards life and death in the light of the world to come, and in this light death receives a twofold aspect, — the one bright and blissful, the other dark and sinister; the one heaven, the other hell. While the wicked fear death, and those favored by the fortunes of this world shun the very thought of it, the wise and virtuous welcome death as a friend, consoler, and deliverer. They do not jest with death, knowing it to be the consequence and punishment of sin, the end of the time set for acquiring merit and the beginning of eternal retribution. They are, on the other hand, too wise to fear it, since its terrors have been overcome by Christ's death, and they hope with Christ's assistance also to overcome them, and, in the consciousness of a well-spent life, they look forward to a happy immortality and a glorious resurrection. Even a Christian feels alarm at death's approach, but he is not without assistance and confidence. What he dreads is the death of the soul, sin, of which bodily death is the figure. When both meet, death leads to everlasting destruction; but, as St. Ambrose remarks, we need not fear the end of our life as long as the manner of our life gives us no reason for such fear. Death is the echo of life, and the guarantee of a happy death is possessed by all whose heart is already freed from all undue attachments, and who are always prepared to die.

Death puts an end once for all to all meritorious activity, therefore it is not merely an evil but an irreparable misfortune for all who meet him with empty hands. Those, on the other hand, who pass away after honestly completing their task in life have no reason to shrink from death, but should rather bid him welcome. When a decisive victory has been won a

soldier rejoices at the end of a war; a laborer who has finished the day's task is glad when evening draws near; a builder has no regret at the removal of the scaffolding when the building is completed. Cardinal Wiseman represents St. Sebastian as saying to Fabiola: "In any form let death come; it comes from a hand that I love. As joyful as is the epicure, when the doors of the banqueting hall are thrown wide open, and he sees beyond them the brilliant lamps, the glittering table and its delicious viands; . . . as blithe as is the bride, when the bridegroom is announced, coming with rich gifts, to conduct her to her new home, will my exulting heart be, when death, under whatever form, throws back the gates, iron on this side, but golden on the other, which lead to a new and perennial life. And I care not how grim the messenger may be that proclaims the approach of Him Who is celestially beautiful" (p. 149, 1906 ed.).

Those who suffered martyrdom for the sake of truth and virtue did not shrink from death. During the Reign of Terror in France, Viollet superintended the execution of one hundred and twenty-four priests, and he exclaimed: "I am amazed, I am speechless with astonishment, I cannot understand it. Your priests went to their death as cheerfully as if they were going to a wedding feast" (Baruel, *Hist. du Clergé pendant la Révolution*).

Why should a Christian, after conscientiously finishing his work, mourn at being called to rest and to the reward of his labor? Death is to him not an evil, but the end of all evils; the entrance into perfect liberty and the beginning of eternal joy. In this sense we are justified in telling mourners that he whom they loved has finished with toil and suffering and has found peace and happiness in God's presence.

Yet death is a benefit of this kind only to those who have rightly valued and employed their life. It is by esteeming, not by despising, life that we are enabled to face death calmly. Contempt of life may deceive about its loss, a due appreciation of life reconciles us to its loss. It is foolish to attempt to silence lamentations by speaking of the worthlessness of life; it is far better to derive fresh courage to live, precisely from the sense of loss which these bereavements produce. A Christian sets a high value upon earthly life because it is the means

of attaining everlasting happiness; he hopes to enjoy eternal joy in return for a brief existence here below.

Christianity is accused of being opposed to culture and to men's worldly interests, because a Christian's highest duty is to make the other life his goal and to despise and disregard the world in which he finds himself. We are told that both in ancient and modern times men of education have been full of energy and activity, whilst a Christian is bound, under penalty of incurring everlasting death, to hate this life, to abhor the world, and to despise culture, which, being the fruit of the tree of knowledge, is forbidden to him. How can he benefit the world by his work if his heart is set on heaven, if he may gather no treasures on earth which can be consumed by rust and moth, and if he is not permitted even to consider the needs of the morrow? Every true disciple of Him Whose kingdom was not of this world must hate the world and be hated by it, and behave like children, who know not the meaning of life's cares.

Only a misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the Christian theory of life can lead to so unfounded a charge. We read with amazement in the works of modern writers that Christ and His apostles did by their preaching no good to humanity, because they promulgated no new ideas and gave no stimulus to improvement, and did not urge their hearers to make progress in the arts of civilization. "We are never told," says one such critic, "to develop our natural faculties of body and soul to the highest attainable perfection; nor to practise gymnastics in order to increase the strength and beauty of the body; nor to cultivate our intellectual powers so as to enjoy the achievements of art and share in the discoveries of science. But on the contrary we are told, 'If one of thy limbs scandalize thee, cut it off and cast it from thee, and become like little children, otherwise ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.' Nowhere are we commanded to choose a wife and bring up good citizens to serve their country; but we read that some have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven. Nowhere are we ordered to serve our country as soldiers or statesmen, but we read, 'My kingdom is not of this world.' We are not taught to labor for the prosperity of the human race, in fact there is no such word as prosperity in the whole

New Testament, but we are told to go and teach all nations, and to baptize them" (Paulsen, *System der Ethik*).

The Bible has been described as a book in which everyone can find the theory of life that he desires, but, in spite of this, it does not satisfy the demands of certain philosophers, for it contains no instructions on agricultural, social, judicial, intellectual, or artistic matters. It does not teach us how to take care of our health and good looks, how to swim, ride, hunt, or dance. A book in which culture, science, and art, and all the things most valued by the world are treated with contempt, must surely be the production of a spirit opposed to all that constitutes the charm and attraction of life! Yet the Hero of the second part of this book is honored by millions as having done more than any one else to make men happy.

We need not expect to find in Holy Scripture any detailed information on the topics mentioned above. In the first chapter we read that our first ancestors were ordered to grow and multiply, and fill the earth, and make it subject to them. Hence progress is a task imposed upon human beings as a constituent part of God's dispensation. Christ altered this solemn task as little as He abrogated the law and the prophets. He did not indeed repeat the command once given, but was it necessary for Him to urge men to do what the tendencies created in them prompted them to do? Men are by their very nature disposed to develop their social, administrative, intellectual, or artistic inclinations, because human nature demands the opportunity of employing the gifts wherewith it is endowed. Long before the Christian era men had reached a high degree of civilization, and even those who enthusiastically extol the benefits which the spirit of Christianity brought to the world, admire without envy the grand achievements of Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans in the realms of art. Only an enemy of civilization could fail to delight in the brilliant creations of Greek intellect and art, or the marvellous results of the practical wisdom of the Romans, or their efficient judicial and national systems. Only narrow-minded pedantry could fail to discover much worthy of imitation in the civic virtues of the Greeks, and in the Roman genius for administration.

The Founder of Christianity bade His followers "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His justice," and thus introduced

into the pagan world the higher significance of the quest for gain and of the moral aim of bodily labor. When He came on earth there was no real human society, but rather a small number of the rich and freeborn that regarded and treated the vast number of the poor and the slaves as domestic animals or animated tools, provided for their use. The few that possessed in abundance everything that could add charm to life devoted themselves to affairs of state, or to artistic hobbies, or to unbridled avarice and luxury, despising as degraded slaves all who did not belong to their privileged class. Neither Plato nor Aristotle, nor any other ancient philosopher, condemned slavery as an abominable profanation and abuse of human nature; indeed, they defended the cruel custom on the inhuman theory that an unchangeable law of nature had destined the majority of mankind to be the servants of a select few. Christianity insists that all men are naturally free and equal, and, since class-distinctions are unavoidable, it modifies them by teaching that all Christians, being called to liberty and to the inheritance of God's children in Christ, are united by the bond of charity so as to form one great family. Special concern is shown by the Christian religion for the weak and the dependent, — women and children, slaves, and the poor, and in particular it demands that the working class be held in honor.

The lively consciousness of an eternal destiny awakened thoughts and aspirations which could not fail to result in a reform of the social and economic conditions of life. Faith in a future existence required the subordination of worldly interests to those of eternity, yet this did not lead, as has so often been asserted, to a contempt of all the good things of earth, but rather to a due appreciation of the value and the honor of work, which either produces these good things or enhances their usefulness. There is a sharp contrast between the pagan and the Christian attitude towards work. In the ancient world work was done by slaves, now it is the occupation of free men. To the citizen of a pagan state work was something worse than a burden, it was a disgrace; to a Christian it is not only a delight but also an honor. By the pagan work was despised, whilst gain made without work was his aim; the Christian seeks gain through his work and despises an idle existence. He labors not merely from a desire of gain,

but because it appears to him as a form of service pleasing to God, a task assigned him from above as his own life work, for the accomplishment of which he will receive his reward. The recognition of the moral obligation and dignity of work was expressed most emphatically in the mediaeval laws regarding interest and usury. These laws have frequently been misunderstood because they have been judged according to the economic conditions of the present day rather than according to those prevailing at the time when they originated. But even modern radicals who accuse the authors of these laws of ignorance, arrogance, and presumption cannot help paying tribute to the boldness, consistency, and merit of the economic principles of the Church, and are forced to confess that these principles are instinct with the spirit of justice, humanity, and care for the welfare of mankind, especially of the weaker members. Christianity has imposed social duties upon the wealthy, and by insisting upon charity and self-denial checks our natural impulse to seek riches and mere enjoyment. By her doctrines and laws she has given to human society order, unity, and stability, and to the individual a secure existence and peace of mind.

Owing to the disastrous influence which false economic principles had on state legislation, the barriers to unrestricted self-seeking fell. In consequence of unrestrained rivalry the struggle for existence became in countless cases a hopeless affair, a wild pursuit of wealth, of which each individual strove with might and main to acquire as much as possible, thus changing the social organism into an agglomeration of atoms, antagonistic to each other, and held together only by the force of necessity. This unbridled desire for wealth and luxury has found ready counsel and protection in godless science, which spreads what it professes to be exact results broadcast among the masses, and by imparting an irreligious education causes gross confusion of mind and thought. Modern philosophy must be described as a conspiracy against the happiness of nations as well as against Christianity. The flippant argument that Bible verses, the faith in immortality and the hope of heaven are not likely to construct railways and build steamships found willing ears. But the desire to live outside the shadow of the Church was dearly paid for. When religion lost its hold on commerce,

honesty and just dealing vanished also. When once even the definition of usury had been swept away as a relic of obsolete economic principles, there was no obstacle left to the rapacity of capitalists. Like a demon let loose it fell upon all who came within its clutches, reducing many to poverty, making a few rich, and these few unhappy. The wealthy abandoned themselves to luxuries, for which the had-nots clamored as also their due. The two classes were set against each other, each anticipating a conflict that would be a struggle for existence, and the determination to fight it out brought ugly passions into play on both sides. Simplicity of life and contentment of mind that had so long been the happy possession of the middle classes gave way to a craving for living in luxury, and many took up with reckless folly the worship of Mammon, who held them in his grasp until he had drained them of their life-blood, and then cast them down into the abased ranks of the proletariat.

Only those who are unwilling to discern the signs of the times can deny that our modern society suffers from many evils. Remedies must be adapted to the nature and cause of the malady for which they are prescribed. Gerhard Uhlhorn, a member of the governing body of the Lutheran Church, writes: "If we look back into the Middle Ages, we cannot but feel a genuine regret for the passing of the days when no engines existed, when our great cities possessed many church towers but no factory chimneys, when capital had not yet entered upon its harsh tyranny, when instead of the wholesale production in factories, the artisan in his workshop devoted loving care to the making of each article, and when the force of competition had not yet forced men to live at so breakneck a rate as to rob them of all peace of mind."

No intelligent person will despise the achievements of modern progress any more than he would wish to make a long journey by post-chaise rather than by train. A return to mediaeval conditions would be a retrograde movement, opposed to man's natural tendency to advancement. Moreover it is not the material but the moral side of what is called "the social question" that causes most of our troubles. We have to face very complicated problems arising out of the changes that have taken place in our economic life, problems due to the revolution of industry by the introduction of machinery, to wholesale pro-

duction, to distribution of labor, to the inevitable necessity of increased working capital and of loans, and to the greater importance and influence of money as a result of the power of capital. The nations would have been in a position to solve all these problems had they attempted to do so according to the principles and laws of Christianity regarding the importance and distribution of wealth, but instead of this, they reverted more or less to the pagan standpoint, and made one foolish blunder after another, sowing broadcast the fatal seeds which are now bearing fruit.

Even the adherents of those prophets who promised that men, both individually and collectively, would obtain prosperity and happiness from the free action of economic forces, have begun to perceive the truth, and to confess that the demands of sound social and political science and legislation must be "Labor *and* profits, work *and* money, not labor *without* profits, nor either profits *without* labor, not capital against labor." As a matter of fact these two factors of production, which naturally stand in the closest relation, are now set against each other in bitter antagonism.

Our age boasts of its money and its work, but has no right to take pride in either, since money often makes itself contemptible and labor is in contempt. It is a gross falsehood to say that labor is respected in our times. The ability to work is no longer regarded as a personal advantage, and consequently work is no longer considered a development of a man's moral personality, but as a commodity subject to the laws of demand and supply, to be purchased by capital at the lowest possible rate and exploited as fully as possible. Our use of the word "laborer," to denote one of the lowest grades of paid workers, is significant and should fill any one with alarm who realizes what underlies this apparently accidental usage. It points clearly to a cleavage between capital and labor, a fissure dividing the nation, every member of which should be a laborer, though very many are unwilling to be so. Millions of those who extol labor have no sense of its moral dignity and obligation. If you were to suggest to them that they ought to look upon labor as the main purpose of their life, to be performed for love of God and of the neighbor, for a heavenly rather than an earthly reward, they would laugh at your foolish ex-

aggeration and religious fanaticism. They are so thoroughly infected with the pagan view of life that they look upon work as an evil — unfortunately for most people a necessary evil, because only by means of work can men earn the money to provide themselves with comforts. Modern man seeks gain and enjoyment without work when possible; with work only when his desires cannot otherwise be gratified.

This thoroughly pagan view of life is accepted not only by shirkers and sharpers, who live at the expense of their victims, by usurers and professional beggars, but even by socialists who profess with Karl Marx to see in labor the sole basis of all value and income. They proclaim the principles of materialistic philosophy, but oppose the ideas of capital and ownership in terms calculated to mislead the Christian workman. It sounds so reasonable and genuinely Christian to say that in the democracy of the future work will be obligatory upon all; everyone is to labor, not for himself, but for society, which will reward him with a due share in the good things of life in proportion to the work he accomplishes. But the egoistic principle which is apparently tabooed by socialism is in reality its motive force. It fails altogether to value the higher aims, the moral significance, dignity, and honor of labor. Selfishness is Socialism's only reason for labor, and it attaches to profit so much importance as to claim it exclusively for the workers. Work is regarded not as a duty and a means of moral growth, but only as a producer of wealth, as a burden, which, if evenly distributed, will weigh as lightly as possible upon the individual. The socialists aim at increasing wealth and enjoyment not by more but by less work, and they hope to solve this contradiction by the confiscation of all private means of production, of all land, buildings, machinery, and capital, and by making public property of all of it. The socialistic idea of labor is as remote from the Christian as collectivism is from the apostolic community of goods. Reason teaches man that he ought not to labor like the animal, which exerts itself only to satisfy its hunger, but that he is born to labor as a bird is made to fly, and he ought to regard work not only as a means of acquiring earthly wealth, but as a destiny divinely appointed for him. Moreover, that he must regard as true work also activities that aim at the higher possessions and tend to the development and uplifting

of the inner man. In the light of Christianity work possesses a peculiar dignity. The labor of a Christian, who strives to follow his Saviour's example, bears the character of expiation, gaining for him a right and a claim to eternal glory.

The majority of people of our days see only the hardships, but not the value and delight of work, consequently they hate and despise it and are discontented with their lot. They would not feel this resentment against fate, nor envy of those whose path is smoother, if they possessed the moral strength to love and respect labor, and to make it part of their very existence. But how are they to obtain this strength now that labor has lost its higher significance, its honor and dignity? How can we talk to them of the moral necessity of labor after modern education and scientists have robbed them of their faith in God, and of all belief in the spirituality and immortality of the soul? If man is nothing but matter the highest aims of his existence must naturally be sought in this life in the shape of earthly pleasure and wealth. Socialism does not hesitate to draw out in their extreme form the logical conclusions which follow from the crude materialism of modern thought and action, and while this is the secret of its power and attraction, it may have the unintended merit that society, compelled by the merciless spirit of socialism to gaze upon the mirror thus held up before it, will shrink back in horror and return to belief in God and immortality. It is a great truth, far too little understood, that no economic reform can succeed unless it is accompanied by moral improvement; that no moral improvement is possible without a pure and living sense of religion, and any purely subjective religion is weak and ineffectual in the case of the masses. Religion, however, devoid of the belief in a future life is a mere phantom without body and soul.

Nothing but the hope of another life makes our present existence endurable, and imparts to it a meaning and purpose, a value and dignity. To live is to work; pain and effort, however, will always accompany work, even under the most perfect economical and social conditions. Just as there will always be the poor, so will there always be working classes, who should be so convinced of the dignity of labor as to resist any temptation to consider themselves as a lower and less honorable class on that account. Only the few are capable of intellectual achieve-

ments, and manual labor must always be the lot of the many. This has been the case in every age, and will continue to be so, since the human race with its manifold spiritual and bodily needs forms one organism, the members of which are dependent mutually upon one another. The life of an artisan, a day-laborer, or a factory hand differs greatly from that of a scholar, an artist, or a statesman, yet all are equally convinced of the importance and value of their work. And why should it be otherwise? A machine stops working as soon as one tiny wheel or screw gets out of order. To supply the wants of the body is as indispensable as to provide food for the mind. The actual value of life depends not upon the nature of the work, but upon the disposition of the worker, and very frequently an unsuspected wealth of what makes life inwardly valuable compensates for lack of outward ease. Every really useful form of toil demands exertion and self-denial and is therefore a worthy pursuit, making for good. The moral value of a man depends not upon what he does, but upon how he does it; not upon what place he occupies in the world, but upon how he uses the world for his moral and intellectual development. Carlyle praises "the noble, silent men, scattered here and there, each in his department, silently thinking, silently working; whom no morning newspaper makes mention of. They are the salt of the earth;—a country that has none or few of these is in a bad way. . . . Woe for us, if we had nothing but what we can *show* or speak! Silence, the great empire of silence; higher than the stars, deeper than the kingdoms of death. It alone is great; all else is small" (*The Hero as King*).

Rationalism sets aside as worthless all that cannot be subjected to scientific or mathematical observation, and looks upon history as nothing but a record of outward events, and upon the life of an individual as an illustration of that of the species. Ancient philosophers went so far as to deny the possession of an immortal soul, of a soul at all, to children, women, and slaves, who, though members of the human race, were either mentally inferior or legally deprived of freedom. Some recent thinkers have revived this uncharitable view, with the further limitation that only scholars, poets, and artists have any just claim to life after death. Christianity, on the contrary, recognizes that all human beings, without distinction of age,

sex, race, or calling, possess to the fullest degree the dignity, destiny, and rights of humanity, and therefore the natural value of life is the same to every individual. A celebrated jurist remarked that the very principle that man as such is a juridical being, a being with legal rights, is more important for the human race than all the triumphs of industry, and that even the Roman law never rose to such a height. This principle, which lays down the equality of human rights, is merely an application of the Christian doctrine that all men are God's creatures, made in His likeness, and that all are redeemed, the brethren of Jesus Christ, and heirs to the kingdom of heaven.

Behind the history of humanity is another, incomparably fuller, history, which cannot be written by man; and in the same way underlying the manifestations of individual life is the record of the heart and soul, known only to God. Every Christian, whether of high or low degree, hears the words, "Work whilst it is yet day, the night cometh when no man can work" (John ix. 4). The permanent result of this work depends not upon its manner or duration, but upon its moral worth. Hence, many who have at an early age been taken by death have fulfilled many years. As Seneca says (*Ep.* 62), not the number of years, but our disposition of mind and heart, proves us to have lived long enough.

Therefore to the *Memento mori* the Christian adds an emphatic *Memento vivere,* and takes as his motto the words "Work and pray." To him life is a business with "double entry" in a higher sense than that of ordinary book-keeping; the chief aim that he keeps in view is to have a balance in his favor in the book of life. He knows that he will have to give an account of the use made of all his talents, and that he will reap as he has sown, and this knowledge is not conducive to dreamy, inactive contemplation or to gloomy reflection. It is well for us often to look down, as from a height, upon the turmoil of the world, that we may not lose ourselves in it, but may realize that we are destined for something better. After breathing for a while the invigorating air of heavenly thought, we return with renewed energy to our work on earth. The prospect of eternity confirms our esteem of the significance of our temporal existence and strengthens our faith, whereas rationalism can give to its followers no conception of the true

meaning of life. Or does a brief existence that soon vanishes into nothing deserve the very name of life? How can any one take interest in work from which he anticipates no gainful result? Who would have the courage to begin an edifice that he knows will be destroyed even before completed? He who dares to believe in himself, and at the same time believes that he must lose himself again, cannot be said really to live. He who feels the desire for perfection and must confess it to be unattainable will be devoid of the energy to live and act in the crucial test. Nothing but the thought of eternity gives us perseverance in our tribulations and steadfastness in the storms that assail us.

There should be no place for cowardice or despair in the Christian plan of life. A Christian does not covet what God sees fit to withhold for the present, viz, a mirror, by means of which he may behold his own destiny in perspective with the whole course of the world; only at the end of time does he look for an elucidation of all obscurity, a solution of all problems, and a complete justification of the moral order, which it is sometimes hard to trace in the destiny of the individual. Remembering St. Augustine's *dictum* that we are bound to believe in divine Providence even when our dim eyes cannot follow its action, the Christian will not dare to criticize the hand that now paints on the canvas of his life indispensable shadows, the full significance of which will be appreciated only in the light of the world to come. Is it not unreasonable and unjust to express a hasty condemnation of a masterpiece of which the little corner revealed to our gaze by the artist fails to make an impression? One who fixes his eyes on some detail that becomes intelligible only in its connection with the rest of the picture misjudges the Divine Artificer Who is the designer of the whole. One who estimates God's ordinances by the standard of human perception inevitably begins to doubt His love, His wisdom, or His justice, when he considers the countless misfortunes that befall the just as well as the unjust, and the sufferings often borne by the innocent rather than the guilty. The more righteous he considers himself to be, the louder in time of trial will be his complaints that his heavenly Father is estranged from him and treats him unkindly and unjustly, whereas the estrangement is the result of his own

foolish feelings and fancies. "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." A man who obediently accepts things as they come, looking at God's designs as a whole, and entrusting himself without fear or resistance to the Divine guidance, is not disturbed when darkness overwhelms him — indeed he often realizes that it tends to his real good.

A gloomy day is often followed by a bright evening, and in the same way the clouds that overshadow the noontime of life frequently pass away at its close, and nothing remains of them but a glowing mass lighted up by the rays of the setting sun. What seemed once an insoluble problem, or a blow of blind destiny, proves in the end to have been the work of our heavenly Father's wise and loving providence, and our cries of anguish give place to thank-offerings, for we see that God hath indeed done all things well. Finally, this insight into the real meaning of our past life inspires us with faith and hope for the future.

True, lamentations for the dead are still heard as discords in the harmony of the universe. Death, however, makes his approach in very various ways. To the unbeliever he says that the end of all things is near; to the believer he whispers that the time has come to receive the reward. The survivors, if they are truly religious, believe that it is well with the dead, for they know that death is not merely the action of a natural law, but an expression of God's will. They reverence Him as the Lord of life and death, and know that He wounds only in order to heal, and never takes without giving. The loss of one of our possessions teaches us to value the more those that remain with us. If we mourn one whose mortal career was virtually part of ourselves, we are led from this very loss to a greater appreciation of life in its right aspect, and we gain fresh courage to face it. If we become poorer in outward support, the more do we need inward strength. We realize that it is our duty to carry on the life-work of the friend who has left us, to take his place and bear alone the burdens that formerly he shared with us. The dead ought to live on, not merely in their own works, but also in the works of those who survive them. There is a beautiful passage in Tacitus' account of the death of his father-in-law, Agricola: "If, as philosophers believe, there is a place prepared for the spirits of the righteous,

if great souls do not perish with the body, then rest thou in peace, and recall us, who love thee, from unavailing grief to a contemplation of thy virtues. We desire to honor thee by admiration, and, if our strength permit, by emulation, rather than by eulogies." Our dead are still ours; we do not lose them, if we resolve not to do so. Not one is lost to us of those whom we have loved here below, as long as we determine to retain their likeness and personality in remembrance. The beloved departed is present with us if we are present with him, and no external force, but only our own will, can separate us from him. Death may even intensify a spiritual union, because the friend who is gone is now free from the defects of his individuality, and is more radiant in our sight, being encompassed by the splendor of eternity.

Infidels we know well try to appropriate this consoling thought, and maintain that to live on in the memory and affection of posterity compensates for the immortality they have ceased to believe in. They even adopt the proposal made by D. F. Strauss to substitute for the worship of God the cultus of men conspicuous for intellect or for benefaction to the human race.

But can any one seriously suppose that, once the sense of the value of life has been lost, its place can be supplied by dressing up such a phantom? The Preacher in the Old Testament says, "The times to come shall cover all things together with oblivion; the learned dieth in like manner as the unlearned" (Eccles. ii. 16). Nowhere was the desire to attain to historic immortality so great as in ancient Rome, where it often stimulated men to do heroic actions; but even there its vanity was sharply denounced. Cicero, for instance, represents P. Cornelius Scipio in describing a dream as asking, "What doth it profit a man to be famous among posterity, when those who lived before him, were unconscious of his very existence?" If to be held in remembrance by those who come after us is what lends value and energy to our present existence, we may as well, like Herostratus, become notorious for crimes, if power and opportunity are lacking to become famous for virtues. Monsters like Nero and Marat live in history no less than great men like St. Augustine and Michelangelo. Really great names are rare and tower above the rest like giants over the lesser men

who stand beside them. But such heroes are few and far between. What would become of society if everyone, in order to avoid oblivion, took it into his head to play the hero? What respect would be left for those modest workers, who supply our daily needs, and without whom even the hero would cut as poor a figure as Don Quixote?

Through a mistaken kind of magnanimity Lotze thinks that, in order to prove the purity of one's intention, everyone should exclude his own self from the joy of immortality, "but he will not be able to avoid desiring it for others unless the world, with all its boast of historical development, is to appear merely an incomprehensible and useless confusion. Because the meaning of the world would turn into contradiction, we reject the idea that the work of successive generations benefits posterity only, and is irrevocably lost so far as the workers themselves are concerned."

What we cannot deny to others we may also desire for ourselves. If death is the end of all things, then it is outrageously unjust to demand of a man that he should risk everything for his neighbor's good, even to sacrifice himself to it. If we cease to exist what good can it do us to be remembered? How can we be said to continue to live if we are absolutely deprived of life, even of such life as the Homeric shades were supposed to enjoy? Is it not empty talk to speak of duties to that which is non-existent? Materialism recognizes no human society, but merely a multitude of human individuals, who at death return to the matter of which they were formed. Seeking a humanity without human beings, it is incapable even of uniting the living into a society in which each is impelled by charity to labor for the others, to suffer and rejoice with one another. How can a materialist retain any real relation with the dead, since the hand that should grasp the other end of the link is missing? The dead are not given existence merely by talking about them. If the immortality of a name be not upheld by the hope of a higher immortality, and if it be not an earthly reflection of eternal life, it can be nothing but a phantom, a shadow without a body, a rainbow without promise. Christianity understands better the needs of the human heart, and offers it more than a barren prospect of posthumous fame, which must soon die away. Christianity excludes no one from true happiness, and

promises fullest participation in it to those who perform not the most brilliant, but the most virtuous actions; to those who walk modestly, doing good to all in the spirit of unselfish charity; and as this is not only possible, but even more easy of attainment in a humble position in life, no one is at liberty arbitrarily to forsake his allotted post.

By effecting a reconciliation between death and life, and between the law of death and the desire to live, Christianity has conferred an inestimable benefit upon suffering humanity. A Christian does not mourn like those who have no hope, and who therefore cannot instil hope in the dying. Cold and gloomy like the grave is the pagan conception of death and the next world, and even the most intellectual nations of antiquity failed to discover any consolation. "Poetry had pretended to enlighten the grave and even glorify it, but had only in truth remained at the door, as a genius with drooping head and torch reversed. Science had stepped in, and come out scared, with tarnished wings and lamp extinguished in the fetid air, for it had only discovered a charnel-house. And philosophy had barely ventured to wander round and round, and peep in with dread, and recoil, and then prate or babble, and, shrugging its shoulders, own that the problem was yet unsolved, the mystery still veiled" (Wiseman, *Fabiola,* p. 152, 1906 ed.).

Those who have visited both the catacombs in Rome and the street of tombs in Pompeii cannot fail to have been struck by the contrast between the Christian and the pagan ideas of death. The inscriptions in the catacombs give us the impression of hope and confidence. Expressions that cast any sort of doubt upon the immortality of the soul are altogether absent, nor do we find any invocations that suggest uncertainty regarding the happiness of those who have died as Christians. Purely natural thoughts and feelings are not, however, excluded, and lively expression is given in Christian inscriptions to the pain of parting, love of the dead, the harshness of death, that none can escape, lamentations over those who have passed away in the vigor of youth or in the prime of manhood, as well as to sentiments common to all mankind. Yet the "Farewell" uttered by Christians was not devoid of consolation, since they were assured that the dead enjoyed everlasting life with the saints in Christ. On the other hand a Christian student of antiquity

cannot fail to be depressed by the flippant inscriptions in which the materialists of ancient Rome took leave of their gay companions at the close of a life void of hope. For instance: "Thou who readest these words, enjoy thy life, for after death there is no laughter, no gaiety and no riot of wantonness." "Friends, mingle a goblet of wine and drink it, crowning your heads with flowers — for after death, earth and fire destroy all that remains." — "I have lived, and have believed nothing beyond life. — Reader, everything is vain, for nothing is our own." These are the utterances of the grim despair with which paganism struggled against its fear of death.

It would be unfair, however, on the strength of such coarse utterances as these, to condemn collectively the views of all pagan nations, since faith in immortality, or at least a foreboding of immortality, prevailed in the religious thought in the ancient world. The inscriptions denying any future life and recommending the doctrines of Epicurus are probably fewer in number than those which contain allusions to another world and to the Island of the Blest. Yet, after all, most pagan references to another world are gloomy. The realm of their dead was believed to be cold, dark, and silent, and to offer to its inhabitants nothing that could gladden the human heart. In it the souls lead a lonely, inactive, and dreary existence, or else they continue the occupations of their life on earth, but without either aim or gain. In both cases they are but shades, and their life is shadowy and unreal. The gloomy character of the pagan conception of the other world appears most markedly in the religious cult of the Greeks. According to Homer, Hesiod, and the tragic poets, there is no true life except in this world. The inhabitants of the lower world are condemned to an existence that is utterly unattractive. As dim, powerless phantoms they flit about in the darkness of Hades, looking back with yearning to their earthly life, with its alternations of day and night, of labor and rest, of exertion and enjoyment, of joy and sorrow; but by inexorable force they are detained in their sad abode. With intense longing do the poor captives crave the blood of the sacrificial victim, which for at least a moment will restore to them the vigor and consciousness of life. Their condition is so mournful and comfortless that Achilles, after Herakles the most famous of all Greek heroes,

declared the most miserable life on earth to be preferable to the lot of the dead. In answer to Odysseus' attempt at consolation, he said, "Speak not to me of death; I would fain be on earth and serve for hire with a man of low estate, who had no great possessions, rather than rule over all the departed dead" (*Od.* XI).

The one bright spot in the Greek idea of the next life is Elysium, but just as the Valhalla of the Teutons was reserved for heroes who had fallen in battle, the Elysian fields were destined only for those who had received initiation at Eleusis, and for heroes. Indeed, according to Homer's account, not even all the heroes found admission there, since Achilles and many other famous warriors were included among the ordinary multitude of departed spirits. To those who were initiated at the Eleusinian mysteries a real prospect of future happiness was opened. Hence in the Homeric hymn to Demeter we read, "Blessed is he of mortal men who has beheld these mysteries; for he who is initiated, and he who partakes not in these rites, have not the same fortune, when dead, beneath the murky darkness."

"Happy," says Pindar, "thrice happy," cries Sophocles, "are those mortals who have witnessed the rites of Eleusis. For them alone is reserved life in the lower world, and for all others sorrow and want." In *The Frogs* of Aristophanes the Chorus sings, "We alone enjoy sunshine and glad daylight, since we have been initiated, and we led a righteous life towards strangers and men of our own land" (*Frogs,* 457). Cicero writes, "We have indeed recognized initiation into the mysteries as the beginning of life, and it imparts to us not only power to live happily, but also to die with surer hope." "Hail, bridegroom, hail, light of youth" was the Eleusinian greeting addressed to Iacchos, who as a glorious youth, holding a torch, lighted up the depths of the lower world, triumphantly dispelling their darkness, and showing to the initiated the path from Persephone's grove to the place where the flashing constellations danced. But only the few were permitted to join the band of the elect, who in a land of perpetual spring indulged in every refinement of luxury; and the vast majority were forced to descend into the sunless abode of the detested ruler of the dead.

A man's outlook on life is greatly influenced by his ideas of the other world. A Christian derives from them resolution and comfort, and the thought of the "last things" spurs him on to do his duty joyfully, and preserves him from timidity and despair. He regards this life neither as a plaything, to be cast away at will, nor as a yoke, to be shaken off when he chooses, but as an infinitely precious possession, and he knows that his lot for all eternity depends upon the use he makes of life. Hence the disposition gained from the Christian view of our temporal existence is serious and yet joyous, hopeful and yet mingled with wholesome fear.

Historians pretend to have discovered that the teaching of Christianity on the subject of the future life had nothing to do with the appreciation of existence or with the will to live. They tell us that the Greeks, in spite of their gloomy views regarding Hades, were a cheerful race not given to depression or cowardice. Men of the world hold up the Greeks with their delight in life as models for mankind, whilst scholars accept the joyousness of the Greeks as an historical fact, and refer to it in support of their attempts to solve the problems of civilization. Both alike are mistaken, although Ernst von Lassaulz, a great scholar, who surveyed the ancient world from a Christian standpoint, perhaps depicted (in *De Mortis dominatu in Veteres*) the Greek theory of life in too gloomy colors.

Writers like Buckle, who take considerations of soil and climate into account in their thoroughly realistic view of history, deal with the annals of the human race as part of physiography, and discuss national tendencies and dispositions as the exclusive and inevitable results of the natural conditions affecting that nation. Modern anthropologists and geologists attempt to solve the problem of the reciprocal relations existing between man and nature, between historical events and their scene of action, on the lines suggested by Karl Ritter, but approaching the cosmic theory of atomists and monists. This founder of modern geology believed that the course of national development was determined by the configuration of a country. The various continents, arranged and fashioned by divine wisdom, played a part in his opinion akin to that of "great personages," exercising a mysterious and powerful influence on the history of mankind, raising one nation to a high point of civilization,

and keeping another at a lower stage, so that our planet, being appointed by the Creator to educate the nations, is responsible for the culture or the barbarism of its nurslings. More recent writers of Ritter's school substitute for the Creator a blind, natural law, and repeat, with Buffon, what Theodectes expressed in poetical form two thousand years ago, "The nations only wear the livery of the countries that they inhabit." Finally, the psychology of nations, which brings together all branches of knowledge relating to the human race into one higher unity, also regards the collective intellectual life of men from the point of view of an organic process of growth, subject to natural laws and forces, and finds that the character of the social aggregation which results is closely bound up with the physical agencies of its geographical region.

If, then, we were to admit that each nation in its thoughts, aims, faith, aspirations, and life is simply the outcome of the region it inhabits, we should not need to question the fact of the predominant cheerfulness of the Greek mentality. Under the blue sky of Greece, where soft breezes blow and the waves ripple peacefully, men naturally look up toward the sunlight, and delight in all the beauty around them. In such a country the soul of a nation must inevitably turn toward art and philosophy, and life passes pleasantly where productive activity alternates with merry pastimes, warfare with sensual enjoyment, and cheerful social intercourse with dreamy solitude. And since, according to this opinion, religion, too, is a product of geographical and physical conditions, the religious faith and tendencies of Greece could only express the contented disposition of the inhabitants of this happy land, and men so highly endowed with the creative faculty could not fail to reach Olympus and Elysium. In the happiness of life there their activities would find refinement and perfection.

But is it a fact that the theory of life held by the gifted and artistic Greeks harmonized with their favored natural surroundings? Did they really reflect the beauty of their country, upon which the Creator so abundantly lavished every blessing? Can we find among them no trace of sadness and despondency, of weariness and exhaustion? I fancy that the gloom of the much-dreaded Hades cast a very dark shadow upon the brillant picture, which has somewhat undeservedly excited the envy

of modern Hedonists. One of the most solid of classical scholars (Boeckh) writes, "In spite of the splendor of their art and liberty, the Greeks were less happy than most people believe; they bore within them the germ of decay, and the tree had to be cut down because it grew rotten." Ludwig Friedländer says: "There is a widespread belief that life possessed a higher value for the nations of antiquity because their hopes of another life could not possibly be so assured or so joyful as those of Christians. The general impression made by Greek and Roman literature does not, however, confirm this theory. An innate delight in existence certainly characterized the ancient world, and this delight is due to a sense of the ever new beauty of the world, and to a realization of the value of human life. But after all this is only one side of the picture, and on the other we find a kind of resignation, proceeding from a deep consciousness of human misery and weakness, and expressions of distress and despondency occur frequently in ancient literature." The fact is that Greece, like the ancient world generally, found existence a burden. Every Christian possesses hope of consolation in his anticipation of life beyond the grave, but the Greeks, far from being light-hearted, were wont to be oppressed, more generally than we suppose, with the torturing dread of Hades.

It is a fact worthy of remark, though comparatively little known, that this fundamental feeling of the early Greeks can be traced even in modern Greek popular ballads. Hermann Lübke has attempted to render these fully accessible to us, and in the introduction to his work he points out that a strain of profound melancholy runs through Greek minstrelsy. This strain appears most unmistakably in the so-called Charon songs, which describe the inexorable power of death. A gloomy brooding, continually re-awakened by the thought of death, prevents enjoyment of nature, and mingles bitterness in every cup of pleasure. "Happy are the mountains, happy, too, are the meadows, that know nothing of Charon, and fear not death."

In consequence of this remarkable battle between the joy of life and the fear of death, the Greek mind inspired the wonderful creations of its genius with so much melancholy that even those who should be the happiest of mortals show a mournful countenance. Who, for instance, can read the *Iliad* without

being affected by the deep sorrow that oppresses Achilles? Again, in the very poems written to glorify life, there is a discordant note of grief at the misery of existence. This note is audible in the earliest lispings of the race, and it reaches its climax in the Golden Age in the great masterpieces of Greek literature. This melancholy note finds expression in the familiar words of Theognis, "The best is not to be born at all, the second best is to die as early as may be." In the Homeric age death was dreaded more than life only for the reason that life, in spite of all its trials and afflictions, was preferable to aimless roaming in the Land of Shades. As a consequence of his cheerless view of the future life the poet makes the ruler of heaven declare man to be the most miserable creature on earth. Those on the other hand who, like Solon, looked upon death as the end of temporal suffering, and in this sense thought of it as the beginning of eternal peace, preferred it to life. Menander, the most intellectual poet of the Alexandrine epoch, says that those whom the gods love die young. The Orphic seers and the philosophers of the Pythagorean school, overpowered by a sense of sin and the need of atonement, regarded the body as the soul's prison, and believed that the soul was imprisoned in the body in punishment and expiation for some ancient sin. They, of course, greeted death as a deliverer, who restored the purified soul to its God. This theory, enlightened by a premonition of the truth, supplied an explanation of earthly existence and its evils; it esteemed even a wretched life as worth living, and regarded suicide as a foolish and detestable crime. Few, however, adopted this philosophy, which by its moral severity repelled the masses, neither did it long enjoy the favor of the worldly wise.

Many other attempts were made to solve the problem of human existence, but none were successful. In vain did great thinkers strive to reconcile the sufferings of life with man's imperious craving for happiness. Each recognized and pointed out a path leading to it, but none could prove his path to be safe; all promised consolation and satisfaction to the heart's desire, but their very proposals show that instead of bread they had only a stone to offer. Not only the Stoics but also the Epicurean philosophers advocated suicide, and thus disproved the wisdom of the saying, "If death exists, we do not; if we

exist, death does not," — an argument whereby Epicurus fancied that he could rid himself of the fear of death. The Stoics aimed at heroic virtue, and boasted that the storms of life were powerless to affect them, but nevertheless they thought it advisable to have some mode of escape from life, in case of necessity. It is a remarkable feature in the ancient theory of life that Cynics, Cyrenaics and Stoics, who all professed to despise pain and life, agreed with the pleasure-loving Epicureans in describing life as a feast, from which every man is free to retire when he chooses, or as a theatre, where one remains only as long as one pleases.

Even Seneca, who stands morally very high, finds consolation in sorrow by thinking of the gloomy portal of death, which offers to all suffering from the blows of a cruel fate a means of escape from their troubles. He extols the bounty of nature, which has provided but one entrance into life and many exits from it. He says: "It is well with mankind; for no man is unhappy, save by his own fault. If life please thee, remain; if it displease thee, thou art free to return whence thou camest." This philosopher goes to the extent of calling fools those who call the purely natural death a beautiful death. "Never forget," says Epictetus, "that the great door to freedom stands open as a last resort. Let relatives and friends lament, and thus reveal their cowardice; wilt thou be a coward? Cease womanish lamentations and cast off thy mortal covering." It is true that these enthusiastic advocates of suicide do not recommend it unconditionally. Weariness of life, disappointment in love, unendurable physical suffering are not, in their opinion, sufficient grounds for seeking Charon's barque. But there is a contradiction between the Stoic doctrine of absolute resignation to the course of events, and the permission to terminate this course by voluntary death. Marcus Aurelius says that we ought to await the end of life with the calm cheerfulness of a philosopher, and not complain if it is delayed. But, he adds, should we be forced to do some unworthy deed, it is our duty, by means of self-sought death, to forestall or terminate any violation of our conscience. Plutarch and the Neo-Platonic philosophers express similar views.

Some pagan philosophers, writers, and poets, have absolutely condemned suicide. Aristotle says that a man who lays hands

on himself in order to escape earthly misery is a wretched coward. Terentius Varro teaches that true greatness of soul consists in patient submission and renunciation, not in arbitrary abandonment of heavy cares and burdens. Euripides regards thoughts of suicide as evidence of mental and moral weakness; a sensible man will, he says, shun such thoughts even when suffering from grievous sickness, from merciless blows of destiny, and from weariness of life. According to Martial, true heroism is displayed by those who stand firm amidst misfortunes and sorrows, and are not impelled even by loss of honor to cast away a life that has become worthless, or that is dishonored in the eyes of their fellow men.

The truth that God alone has the right to take away life was recognized, at least dimly, by many ancient writers, although it has been discarded by the pagans of our own day. The Orphic seers, Pythagoras and his followers, Socrates, Plato, Cicero, Homer, Euripides, and Vergil look upon suicide as a sinful interference with God's rights, and as an offence that will be most severely punished in the future life. Pythagoras expresses this very beautifully when he remarks that no one ought to desert his post in life without the orders of the commander-in-chief, viz., God. Socrates uses language not unworthy of a Christian when he says that Man is the property of the Godhead, and the object of divine Providence, and he may no more voluntarily forsake the place assigned him in life than a slave may kill himself without his master's consent. It is true that Plato speaks of the body as the soul's prison, and of bodily life as an evil from which death alone can deliver us, but nevertheless he forbids suicide as an outrage upon the ordinance of destiny, which is permissible only in exceptional cases, e.g., when divinely commanded.

The majority of ancient authors, however, follow Zeno in thinking that under certain conditions self-inflicted death is a rational means of quitting life. They go so far as to extol suicide as honorable, virtuous, and commendable, and bring forward in support of their views all the arguments used by our modern advocates of self-murder.

The vague uncertainty of their teachers aggravated the misery of the masses, who had to choose between silent submission to fate and violent interference with it. This life was

hateful in their sight, and the next appeared attractive to those only who imagined it to be happier; but as soon as doubts arose on the subject of Elysium, and when in Cicero's time it was universally ridiculed, death could offer the prospect of only a very limited and questionable happiness, a kind of Nirvana, a cessation of earthly troubles, endless peace in a painless, dreamless sleep. Sallust records speeches in which Caesar and Cato declare death to be the end of all things; Lucretius rejoices that all fear of future retribution has been finally abolished, until at last nothing remained but a choice between the levity of Persius, who cries, "Let us enjoy to the full the pleasures of the moment," and the deep gloom of Tacitus, who pronounces all existence to be no better than a sorry jest. Both Greeks and Romans well understood how to exploit nature in order to enjoy life, and how to multiply and refine luxuries in order to gratify their sensual desires. Their delight in existence did not, however, increase in proportion to the improvement in its outward conditions, and the Greeks of the golden age were less joyous than Homer's contemporaries. "Before his death no man is to be deemed happy," says Sophocles. It was precisely during the classical period that men's minds were weighed down by the terrible thought that temporal happiness was not merely fleeting, but actually dangerous, since it aroused the envy of the gods. Formerly these gods allowed man to sin, that they might then bring suffering upon him; now they pursued him with their spite, even when innocent, if he dared to be or to appear happy. Man is the gods' plaything, was the verdict of Plautus. During the first two centuries of its existence the Roman Empire seemed to aim chiefly at feeding and entertaining the inhabitants of Rome. The public games increased every year in number and magnificence; under Augustus 66 days were devoted to them yearly; under Tiberius, 87. Gladiator contests and fights of wild beasts were of frequent occurrence, and there were great feasts on special occasions. The rejoicings at the dedication of the Flavian amphitheatre lasted 100 days; the celebration of the second Dacian triumph was continued for 123 days in the reign of Trajan, and at such times the emperor lavishly entertained the whole populace. Everything that could delight the senses was displayed in the circus, in the arena, or on the stage. That a life such as this

led to discontent and misery is apparent from the lamentations of the writers of that period.

The ancients were not, therefore, so light-hearted as their zest for games and banquets might lead us to suppose. Sorrow often conceals itself beneath apparent merriment; an aching heart seeks distraction in noisy amusements, an uneasy conscience tries to deaden itself in wild rejoicing, and even despair puts on the guise of reckless levity. This is not unlike the pleasure in life which Theognis expresses, after declaring it the best of all things never to be born at all, and the next best to die soon. He writes (*v.* 973–978): "No man whom the earth has once covered, and who has gone down to Erebos, home of Persephone, still enjoys the sounds of lyre or flute, or partakes in the gift of Dionysos. Considering these things I indulge as long as my knees remain still supple and my head is still firm on my shoulders."

No peace here, no happiness hereafter; to bear life is hard, to renounce it still harder — such was the feeling of the pagan world, which could neither banish the fear of death from the minds of the living, nor give to the weary the courage to face the protracted struggle. He who clings to earthly existence with every fibre of his being, loses his best possession when he dies. He who had nothing more to lose could expect at most a negative gain from death. Hence arose that deep melancholy which drove men to despair and suicide, unless, indeed, it forced them to submit in silence to whatever happened, because they believed in blind fate, or feared punishment in the other life. Nothing but the prospect of eternity enables men fully to appreciate life. The Greeks and Romans knew as well as we do that earthly existence as such, with all its possessions and enjoyments, was worthless; and they grew more and more weary of life despite all their efforts to depict the world in rich and glowing colors.

St. Paul says, "We will not have you ignorant concerning them that are asleep, that you be not sorrowful" (1 Thess. iv. 12). To these significant words St. John Chrysostom (*Orat. in illud de dormientibus*) adds: "Mourn, but not as the unbeliever, who knows nothing of the resurrection and has doubts regarding the future life. We are ashamed at having to witness violent outbreaks of unreasoning sorrow among

Christians. What will the heathen say, if they behold such things? Will they not ask: 'Are these the people who speak so confidently of a resurrection? Their behavior does not agree with their words. They say many wise and consoling things about the resurrection, but they behave as if they did not really believe in it. If they were convinced of the truth of a future resurrection, they would not act thus. If they really believed the state of the departed to be better, they could not lament as they do.' These and other similar remarks are made by unbelievers, when they see Christians mourning excessively over the dead. Therefore let us practise moderation so as not to disgrace the Christian faith in a resurrection."

Certainty of a future resurrection robs death of its horrors. The soul will be reunited to the same body in which it dwelt on earth, and, whilst separated from the body, the soul does not lose interest in it. Death is only a temporary separation of body and soul; it destroys the imperfect and faulty abode of the soul and gives it over to corruption; but this is a necessary preliminary to the impending miracle of divine power, which from the same matter will rebuild a new and far more beautiful body. Is it a cause for lament when the farmer sows seed in the furrow, and there lets it decay, or when the business man puts his money in the savings bank? At death the soul lends its capital to the earth, and on the last day will receive it again with abundant interest. Almighty God Himself vouches for the truth of this tenet.

A Christian's sorrow must never lead to wild outbursts of grief or to despondency. Only those can let themselves be overwhelmed by sorrow who regard the departed one as dead forevermore, and as one who lost everything at death. Where faith in immortality and in the resurrection is absent, a burial is, of course, an occasion for unallayed mourning. It is at least an indication of thoughtlessness, if not actually a concession to unbelief, when Christians speak of the departed as "poor" so-and-so, and emphasize the trappings of woe at funerals and other services for the dead. Christian burial is a religious act, an acknowledgment of faith in Christ's teaching, and a profession of hope in His promises. Those present at this ceremony are there not so much to mourn, as to help the soul that has passed away. In the Middle Ages Masses, prayers, and alms

for the dead were fittingly called "soul helps," the means, namely, of assisting souls of the departed just to attain to the purity requisite for admittance to God's presence.

Nevertheless we are justified in mourning for the dead, and those who defend this right do not deserve the reproach of sentimentality. Even a tendency to tearful emotion is distinctly preferable to gloomy pessimism, for the former reveals genuine affection as well as sorrow, whilst the latter is cold and heartless. On the other hand, a consistent, unbelieving pessimist ought not to shed tears at the death of one whom he loved; he ought rather to rejoice that his friend is delivered from the world and the agony of existence, even though this release may have been effected under most painful circumstances. He should, with Schopenhauer, even exult every time some one by means of suicide passes into the cold abyss of annihilation.

Tears shed at the loss of friends or kinsfolk are not a mark of imperfection or weakness; they are reasonable, right, and pleasing to God, for they proceed from a source that originates in God, and are the expression of love and sympathy. St. Francis of Sales writes, "There is, I think, no one in the world whose affection is more tender and heartfelt than my own, and who therefore suffers more grievously at being separated from dear friends than I do, for I besought God to fashion my heart thus."

Our divine Lord Himself wept over the death of Lazarus, and allowed the people to estimate His love for His friend by His tears, for they said: "See, how He loved him!" Mary, the valiant woman, did not hesitate to give free play to her natural emotions, and saints such as Ambrose, Augustine, Basil, and Bernard, were far from displaying that callousness which is sometimes mistaken for resignation to God's will, or for nobility of mind. A Christian is a human being, and in the pain of separation he may be wholly human, though he must not cease to be a true follower of Christ.

If consolation is to be effectual it must be fitted to the pain. Unseasonable attempts at consolation intensify rather than alleviate the suffering. Job's friends offered him arguments, clever indeed, but cold, and he replied, "I have often heard such things as these; you are all troublesome comforters." And mourners are justified in making the same complaint if they

are unhappy enough to find their friends lacking in comprehension of their grief. We are bound to suffer intensely at the loss of one whom we truly love. It would be cruel and foolish to attempt to distract the mind of one so afflicted. A tender heart at such a moment is conscious of nothing but the purest and most unselfish love, and its comfort wells up from the same spring as its tears, namely, from the thought of the beloved dead.

As every human heart feels the necessity to love, therefore it must inevitably suffer when the object of its love is removed. It rebels against the sense of loneliness, and its first impulse is not to seek another object for its love, but to cling to the object it has lost. It desires to undo what has been done, and a stricken heart often struggles with desperate courage against the painful reality, employing every faculty of the mind and even the bodily senses in this vain effort. A mourner refuses to think of anything but the departed friend; he longs for his company, wishes to see his picture everywhere, and to speak only of him. He expects that all friends will speak only of the loss he has suffered. Often he calls the name of the deceased and fancies that he hears his tread, and looks for him to enter when the door opens. In a funeral oration pronounced over his brother Satyrus, St. Ambrose describes vividly his spiritual intercourse with the departed, how he sees him at night, hears his familiar voice, beholds his dear face, embraces and converses with him. Even in the day-time he seems to see and hear him everywhere, and to live with him in closer union than ever; he thinks incessantly of the happiness which they have enjoyed together, and which now is buried in his brother's grave. So entirely are his thoughts occupied with the dead that he is growing indifferent to all around him.

We cannot demand of one who has wept bitter tears over a death-bed and a grave that he should at once rejoice in the happiness of the friend whose sufferings are over, and who, we trust, has won the palm of victory. An ear habituated to the cry of sorrow cannot at once attune itself to exulting strains of gladness, nor can an aching heart forget its own loss in the thought of the company to which the departed has been admitted. For a time the survivor is dead to all enjoyment, clings to his grief, and refuses to be comforted. What were the feel-

ings even of Mary, the Mother of Sorrows, on Good Friday? No artist can depict her otherwise than crushed by grief. No doubt, for her dear Son's sake she was glad that His life of suffering was over, but at the same time the mother's heart was filled with such indescribable anguish that, as St. Bridget tells us, she would gladly have been buried alive with Him had it been His will; He was her all, and she was, as it were, laid with Him in the sepulchre.

The first agony of separation is perhaps most readily soothed by the hope of permanent reunion in the other life. Death is then seen not to be a final severance, and thus the source of the bitterest sorrow becomes one of abundant consolation. Death is indeed an absolute separation, so far as this life is concerned, and this fact causes its bitterness; but those whom it has severed will not remain separated forever; they will meet again in that happy land where all the righteous assemble, and where the pain of further partings is unknown.

What a wealth of consolation is afforded by this thought at the agonizing moment when the coffin containing the remains of him we loved is lowered into the grave! We imagine we hear his voice bidding farewell, only for a time, to the survivors; it touches the tenderest chords in their hearts and calls forth noble and consoling emotions. Moreover, the cry from the grave is confirmed from above and our natural sense of loss is soothed by the promise of complete and lasting restoration, and we realize with supernatural certainty that our friend is not dead, but will live forever; he has but gone before us into the land of the living, to our common home, where he awaits us, and where we shall be inseparably united. This reunion will be effected when our bodies, too, fall asleep in death, and it will be perfected on the last day. Let us therefore have patience for a little while, and then the Lord of life and death will call us to put off our earthly covering and to enter into our new home. When a kinsman or friend passes away, a Christian knows that he still lives, hidden indeed from our bodily eyes but beheld by the eyes of our spirit. Only the body dies; our friend lives and will live for ever, and we shall see him again. Only the worn-out garment has been stripped off by the icy hand of death, and this is not for ever; he will put on the same garment again after it has been cleansed, renovated, and beautified.

The following instance shows how great is the force of this consoling thought. In the year 1843 there was a fearful earthquake at Basse Terre in Guadeloupe, and a French official named Naudau-Desislets suffered the terrible affliction of witnessing in less than two minutes the violent death of wife, seven children, and sister-in-law. Christian faith and hope suggested to this modern Job the words which he addressed, soon after the catastrophe, to an unbeliever, to the very man for whom Nicolas wrote his famous *Philosophical Studies.* In this letter Desislets writes: "My sorrow is not so overwhelming as some suppose. Our religion contains truths that afford consolation, and there is the hope that offers us a prospect of reparation. Both are so firmly rooted that I have not yet ceased to be in touch with my dear ones. I ask them for advice; my heart, now our sole means of communication, knows how they decide, and hears their answers, and then my conscience and judgment enable me to come to a resolution. Believe me, dear D . . . , there is something more to man than lifeless clay. In less than two minutes I was robbed of all that I loved, those dear ones adorned with such marvellous beauty, not the earthly beauty that is so quickly destroyed by death, but with a beauty which seemed the reflection of divine goodness and wisdom. I had to see their bodies crushed to death, and I should indeed have been reduced to despair, had I believed annihilation to be the end of man. But, as it is, I am calm and resigned. I submit reverently to the hand of Him Who ordered things thus; I will even go farther and say that I am thankful, for His hand is ever guided by perfect and unchanging justice. When I began to estimate at their true value all the heavenly delights of reunion with those whom I have lost, God said to me: 'Canst thou be so foolish and unjust as to suppose Me to have no glorious object worthy of Myself?' Believe me, D . . . , Louise is immortal; Victorine and Stéphanie are immortal; my little ones, so full of innocence and charm, are immortal; our good Malvine, a saint and martyr, is immortal. To think otherwise is to trample underfoot all sentiments based on virtue, and to substitute for them the shallow views and foolish opinions of a vain and ignorant philosophy." . . . The bereaved husband and father rejoined his dear ones in the other life on the first anniversary of their death.

The grave is therefore not only a serious *memento mori*, but a love token, stimulating our hope and courage. The lofty truths of immortality and resurrection descend upon the sorrowing heart and meet its natural needs and cravings; gently the prospect of reunion beyond the grave is as balm poured into the aching wound. The cherished sorrow is not taken from the weeping, but their sorrow is raised to a higher plane. They do not attempt to remove from the heart the dear one who has been torn away, rather the heart is encouraged to bear him in memory. These truths are the foundation of the faith in a future reunion, and only an infidel will cruelly dare to condemn such faith as folly.

If it be deemed folly, what has the modern philosopher to offer in its stead? One such writer says: "No true substitute can be offered to the one whom chance has robbed of his dearest friend. It is impossible to replace the individual bond formed by the intercourse of a lifetime. The loss is in the fullest sense of the word irreparable, and it would be foolish to attempt to devise means of making good such a blow of destiny. Feelings must be left to follow their normal course and to find assuagement in the flight of time. Gradually acute anguish will give place to a quieter sorrow, and man rises above the thought of the individual and the particular to a contemplation of the whole. He fixes his eyes on universal mankind and feels a sympathy of which unimpeded clinging to the individual is incapable. The particular fate seeks shelter in infinity and his own personal pain in the great whole of the world's destiny."

Fine sounding words, but what is their meaning? What comfort and strength can they give to a stricken heart? George von Gizycki writes: "In us nature rejoices in herself; in us she herself blossoms into consciousness, and the ground which brings forth new blossoms abides. Well may we give up our self-seeking, our vanity and discontent, the untrue separation of ourselves from the rest of nature. Let us in mind bathe in the endless flood and tide of physical and mental evolution; let us widen our Self, until it comprehends the whole world and feels its eternity." (*Ethical Philosophy,* p. 228, Eng. trans.) When a pupil of such a teacher dies he finds comfort "in the thought of his well-spent life, and his love of those who will survive him; . . . should death tear from him the fondest treasure of

his heart, he knows that all mankind ought to be the object of his love" (*ibid.* p. 81). "Death teaches us how to live, and the more fervently does it bid us love, if it is really death, the final end, after which there will be no meeting again" (*ibid.* p. 234).

And such thought is supposed to encourage us! The agony of fear to lose for ever those we love is in true ratio to a love intensified by the hopeless prospect of parting, never to meet again. Surely in such a case our hearts would long for less capacity of loving, if only they could thus suffer less. Whatever advantage we might gain escapes us, since intensification of love is purchased only by the loss of the object loved, whereas in point of fact our loved ones are so precious to us precisely because they are not mere fleeting shadows passing over the stage of our life, but are permanently with us to delight and enrich us. There is no reality in a form of consolation that bids us sink our individual pain of parting in the universal sorrows of the world. No comfort is afforded by "a glance at the human race" if the same destiny awaits us all. The idea can awaken only feelings of pity or contempt for a philosophy so perverse. These would-be comforters look at humanity as a whole, and at the individual as only a passing embodiment and manifestation of the world-soul, hastening towards the grave that is common to all. They profess to tell us what will become of mankind after all who now enjoy a separate existence have lost it again, and with it their own being. Let them argue as they will, they can arrive at no tangible result; and yet we need not be so very earnest in taking them to task. The sort of ingenuity which has invented a humanity without human beings is not so very formidable.

Auguste Comte, the founder and first "high priest" of Positivism, set up humanity as "the Great Being." Underlying this new theory is the doctrine that whatever transcends sense experience is absolutely unknowable, and immortality falls under this heading. In spite of this profession of ignorance regarding the continued existence of the soul, Positivists at their meetings fervently invoke the dead whom they honor, especially Auguste Comte and his intimate friend Clotilde de Vaux. Soon after the death of the latter Comte addressed three long outpourings of spirit daily to his "holy companion

and chief patroness," his "divine Clotilde, priestess of humanity," the "virgin-mother," who was to occupy in his church a position similar to that occupied by the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar and the Blessed Virgin in the Catholic Church. At Clotilde's grave J. Lagarrique said: "Thy name, Clotilde, and Comte's will be coupled for ever with the revered names of Laura and Petrarch, of Beatrice and Dante. . . . To thee did Comte owe his admission into the sanctuary of noble feelings, which revealed to him the source of sacred happiness and human morality. . . . Farewell, noble patroness, accept the homage of our heartfelt gratitude. . . ." These high-flown utterances of one who is by conviction an agnostic or a doubter are meaningless words, addressed to an empty name or a memory. How different is the prayer of the faithful for the departed, "Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them!" In uttering these words we feel that we are still united with our dear ones; we know that they still live and have not ceased to love us.

Even apart from the gloomy end which Materialists foretell for the human race the prospect of an impersonal existence after death offers neither encouragement nor consolation. Neither the thought to live on in one's descendants, nor to continue to influence posterity morally and intellectually, satisfies the craving and consciousness of our minds, for neither is a true, individual existence, but one devoid of all substance and reality. Such a life contains no guarantee of permanence, since it depends entirely upon exterior conditions, which cannot be calculated, and upon the will of men, which is always liable to change. What certainty have the benefactors of mankind that the seed which they sow will live, and that the fruits of their good deeds will ripen and produce fresh fruit? We find in history many instances of nations that have neglected, betrayed, and forgotten their noblest sons; in many cases names well deserving immortality would have perished together with the works that rendered them famous had not some higher power inscribed them in the book of life.

History teaches us also that the progress of civilization is not steady, that occasionally a retrograde movement sets in, and the treasures of the past, so laboriously won, are trampled under foot. Our earth is the grave of dead civilizations as

well as of dead individuals, and the same talent for invention which produced the printing-press and the steam engine has produced also dynamite and other agents of destruction. The English historian Gibbon thought that our present civilization would not perish because there are now no longer barbarians seeking to devastate our land, but our generation has given birth to monsters of cruelty, armed with weapons unknown to the savages of old. During the French Revolution the incendiary used petroleum; in Petrograd they had progressed to the use of dynamite and nitro-glycerine; in the recent World War again new and even more destructive weapons were employed. In the depths of every people's soul lurks a spirit of destruction, the foe of all civilization, and when it is let loose it wrecks the work of ages with blind fury and diabolical cunning, and the bonds that restrain it are relaxed precisely by those reckless sophists who rob men of their faith in immortality.

All progress and improvement, the development of art and science, refinement of customs, and the assembling of art and interests and callings into one harmonious whole are undoubtedly the result of the co-operation, and to some extent the amalgamation, of the innumerable individuals that make up the human race. But have all, or even most of them, reached the point of rejoicing in the consciousness that they have it in their power to contribute their share to the beauty of human life as a whole? We are well aware that the great majority of mankind plunge into intellectual movements either with blind faith and obedience or with unreasoning aversion and hatred; they do not use their own eyes and ears, but like a flock of sheep they follow leaders whom they hardly know, and are by them often led to ruin, misery, and death.

Thus when we "contemplate the whole" we lose, together with the idea of an "individual destiny," also the last vestige of consolation to be derived from the idea of "indefinite progress." This is a sufficient reply to the question raised by Hermann Schultz, a Protestant theologian, who writes: "May it not be enough for an individual to be a link in that endless chain, and to die in the hope that he, though an individual, is immortal in humanity as a whole? That all which he has bestowed on the race has brought it nearer to its goal, and will not perish; that the race itself will not die but in endless suc-

cession is approaching its infinite end? Do we need personal immortality as well when each man lives on, either in his children or in his achievements, and thus knows himself to be included in the interminable progress of mankind?"

Not all materialists are so callous in face of death. Buckle, a well-known writer on the history of civilization, regards the sense of immortality produced by love as the best proof of the reality of another life. B. Carneri, though he recklessly denies immortality, cannot avoid paying attention to the argument "that for the sake of our dear ones we need immortality, for would not love, life's choicest gift, be merely a torture to us, could we not hope to meet them again in the next world?" We do not begrudge the man his consoling thought: "When we die, we return, mind and body, and all that we love, to the everlasting workshop whence our insignificant personality proceeded. . . . There is something infinite about this idea, and whoever learns to steep himself in it, will find it an inexhaustible source of rest." This rest can be only a foreshadowing of the final rest of the grave, since the "everlasting workshop" is only a state of unchanging torpor.

E. du Prel, a Darwinian, says, "From the materialistic standpoint, earthly life, passed in fear of death and with the certain prospect of the grave for ourselves and all whom we love, is a brutal fact in nature." Frederick II, who professed infidelity, liked to call himself a Stoic, but found in the Stoic doctrines nothing to avert the pain or soothe the sorrow caused by the death of relatives and friends; he ordered a funeral mass to be said for his infidel friend, Voltaire. F. Jodl, in spite of his vivid sense of the great natural connection existing among men, says, "Very few there are strong enough to renounce all other faith but that in the power and dignity of the human race."

We see how even infidels, standing at the grave of a friend, are seized with a yearning, quite strange to them, for the quiet spirit realm; it happens that in some of them the faith revives when on such occasions they feel the necessity of loving beyond the grave. Never perhaps are men so ready to receive the seed of faith as when softened by sorrow. The stars are always in the sky but we see them only at night, and in the same way the eyes of our mind perceive the light of heaven more easily when the light of life is darkened by death. Who-

ever is not devoid of all feeling must needs ask himself, when taking a last farewell of a dear friend, "What becomes of him?"

Gustav Jäger, a well-known and very enthusiastic disciple of Darwin, says: "Every religion must take into account this feeling of *personal* affection, that should bind together first the members of each family, and then those of society. This feeling cannot be evoked by any kind of mere intellectual instruction, but only through the doctrine of *personal* immortality." To those who deny and ridicule the truths of religion Jäger addresses these words: "Such doctrines are demanded by our instinct for self preservation and you cannot cast them aside. You may formulate them as you will, you may jeer at them as human inventions, criticise their formulation, or cut them to pieces with the scissors of dissection, and boil them down in the melting pot of philosophy — yet the practical results of Christianity are and will be legally binding even upon you." Those who set them aside have to choose between dull resignation and despair. Moritz Wagner, who propounded the law of migration in organic life, was able, as long as he was in good health, to endure the cruel prospect of annihilation, but he could not face old age, "that infamous trick played us by nature," and had recourse to his revolver to make an end of a wretched existence.

One who looks forward to a better world as his home, to which he holds title, feels and acts very differently. Freiherr von Stein would in his old age raise his eyes to the sky, bright with the rays of the setting sun, and say to his companions: "What splendor even here below! and how much greater will it be above! Rejoice with me that I have so nearly reached the goal." Attempts to divert his thoughts from the subject of death annoyed him, and made him ask: "Do you suppose that I am afraid to die? I am content that God should dispose of me as He will." On the day of his death he sent for all his employees, and his mind, we are told, still perectly clear, triumphed once more over his bodily weakness. In solemn words befitting his noble spirit he spoke of his approaching death. The rare strength and purity of his intellect, will, and heart were revealed by every word and look. Never had any one heard him speak more eloquently and clearly. He referred to the most

trifling services rendered him by each individual, and begged all to show similar loyalty to his children, reminding that there was a link between the living and the dead, and that he would rejoice if they remembered him. This great statesman was a true Christian, and the thought of eternity, that had guided him on his way through life, was his light as he passed away. — "He took leave of us, in the firm hope to meet us again in the hereafter."

CHAPTER II

PROOFS OF OUR IMMORTALITY

He whose blind thought futurity denies,
Unconscious bears, Bellerophon, like thee,
His own indictment; he condemns himself;
Who reads his bosom, reads immortal life:
Or Nature there, imposing on her sons,
Has written fables; man was made a lie.

YOUNG, *Night Thoughts*, night 7.

EVERY living creature clings to life, but whereas beasts know no fear of death, man shrinks from it in horror. He is always troubled by the thought: "What will become of me when I am dead? Shall I continue to exist or not?" On the answer to this question it depends whether earthly life is a precious possession or an arrant fraud.

Doubt on this all-important subject is wrong; more than that, it is a misfortune, because it is a symptom of weakness or mental malady. Complete indifference to the other life, coupled with a lively interest in this world, is an unnatural state, which would arouse more astonishment and horror were it less common. To boast even of this indifference, or to parade it for the sake of being admired as a freethinker, is an incomprehensible distortion of the human nature. If the attitude be a mere pose the one assuming it has hardly any claim upon our pity, though this is something we ought never to withhold even from those who are culpably in error.

In the preface to his *Pensées*, Pascal says: "The immortality of the soul affects us so powerfully and touches us so deeply, that we should be devoid of all reason, if we regarded it with indifference. All our actions and thoughts turn in one direction or another, according as there is or is not a hope of eternal happiness, so that it is impossible to take any step with sense and judgment unless we regulate it in regard to this point, which ought to be our ultimate aim."

Pascal distinguishes carefully between those who desire to solve this problem and those who do not trouble about it. He feels sympathy with the former, but is moved to astonishment and indignation at the latter. "It is," he says, "a great misfortune to be in doubt, but there exists at least the duty to probe the doubt, and, therefore, whoever doubts, without examining the grounds of his doubt, is both very miserable and very wrong. Whoever boasts of acting thus is indescribably unreasonable. How can we rejoice at an incurable evil? How can we glory in our ignorance?"

When we ask what our last end will be, reason replies: I shall not wholly die, for I am not wholly a thing of the earth. "Only the dust returneth into the earth from whence it was, but the spirit returneth to God, who gave it" (Eccles. xii. 7).

Death lays its hand only on what is earthly in me, and carries it to the grave, but it has no power over what constitutes my real self, my personality. My soul is not destined to die, but to live for ever. What an encouraging and invigorating thought! Death, which has already robbed me of dear friends and relatives, and which now is knocking at my own door, does not involve the destruction of my being, but the transition to true life. It is but the end of this earthly, incomplete existence and the beginning of one far higher and more perfect; death is the birth to a new life.

Birth is inevitably painful, as every mother knows. At our first birth the cords are severed that attach us to our mother; at the second, the chains are broken that bind us to this world. On the threshold of its new home the immortal soul casts away the trammels of earth, that it may be free to enter eternity. This blessed hope is planted deep in the human heart, and he who cherishes it sees not the gloomy form of death, which terrifies our bodily eyes, but rather the bright countenance with which it delights in the clearer vision of the immortal spirit.

After the death of his saintly brother, Archbishop Basil of Caesarea, St. Gregory of Nyssa visited his sister, St. Macrina, that they might console one another for their grievous loss. Under the form of a dialogue between them, St. Gregory has left us a magnificent dissertation on the soul and the resurrection, representing himself in all humility as his sister's disciple.

He asks her: "Is it not enough to make us weep, when we see a man who but lately spoke, moved and conversed with us, now lying silent and motionless, bereft of consciousness and feeling? His vital force has suddenly vanished, and we know not what has become of it, — like the flame of an extinguished candle, that is no longer in the wick nor elsewhere, but has simply ceased to exist. Is this not reason for sorrow? When the soul leaves the body, we see only what remains behind and becomes a prey to corruption, but we do not see what has become of the soul, nor what change it has undergone. It cannot, I think, reside in air, nor in earth, nor in water, nor in any other creature." After listening thus far, Macrina motioned to him to be silent, and asked, "Can you possibly fear that at death the soul might fade away and disappear?"

It is *possible* for the soul to survive the death of the body. It does not consist of matter, but is incorporeal and elementary, neither subject to the law of dissolution, nor capable of subdivision. It cannot gradually pass away, as Kant asserted, for it is not a mere function, or force devoid of independent existence, but it is itself an entity endowed with force. Death in such case could only take the form of complete annihilation; the soul would absolutely cease to be and return to nothing, and this would be a kind of death without parallel in nature.

Those who deny the doctrine of immortality like to argue: why should there be a continued existence of the soul since everything else passes away? Yet the truth is the opposite of what is called sense perception. What exists can of itself not cease to be, no more than that which exists not can of itself come into being. Natural science teaches that what we call decay is merely a change in matter, a resolution of matter into its primary constituents. In nature nothing is produced by nothing, and nothing passes away into nothing; nothing really perishes, it only assumes a new form, so that the amount of matter and force in nature is constant. Hence recent writers have called death a phenomenon of accommodation. In nature and in the universe nothing is lost; nothing, not even the smallest atom, is annihilated. For instance, when a light goes out it does not perish. The burning particles that form the flame only cease to glow, and as they cool they fly off into the air and enter into fresh combinations there. What we term

death is nothing but the resolution of the body into its constituent parts, not one of which perishes. What force could so completely destroy a grain of sand that nothing of it should be left? Only God possesses such power, for to create something out of nothing is not a greater task than to annihilate it. J. G. Fichte remarks that "in nature all death is birth, and in death itself appears visibly the exaltation of life. There is no destructive principle in nature, for nature is pure, unclouded life. It is not death that kills, but a fuller life, which, hidden behind the first life, bursts forth into new development. Death and birth are but the struggle of life with itself to assume a more glorious and congenial form. It is impossible to suppose that nature should annihilate a life which does not proceed from her, the nature that exists for me, not I for her. What we mortals call death is the visible appearance of this second life. The phenomenon of death is the ladder on which my thoughts ascend to the new life awaiting myself and a new nature existing for me."

How can the soul once for all be cast forth from the ranks of creatures and treated worse than the wretched body, which at least for some time after death defies corruption? Then the traces of our temporal existence, which, though fleeting, vanish gradually and not all at once. Can the memory of us last longer than our nature? Are those great men no longer leading an existence whose fame has spread over the entire world, and whose virtues shine like stars, so that to the end of time all generations will speak of them with admiration and gratitude? Have the dead, whom we can never forget, ceased to be? Their names are cherished in our hearts, and we cannot believe that they no longer live, that they have suddenly been removed from the company of the living and cast out from everything that possesses life, that they have become less than a worm in the dust, less than a withered blade of grass, in fact absolutely nothing. Horrible thought!

We know that this cannot be the case, for, unless materialists are right, the spirit cannot share the fate of the body. Materialists regard the human soul as a product of natural forces, like light and heat, and they look upon its life as a merely natural phenomenon, and upon psychology as a branch of natural science. It is upon discoveries such as these that a follower

of Epicurus bases his whole theory of life when he says, "Man is made of mud, and wades for a time in mud, and produces mud, and returns to mud."

Materialists talk much of matter and metabolism and try thus to solve the innumerable problems connected with human existence and life. On this subject Lotze remarks: "Of all the aberrations of the human mind this has always appeared to me the strangest, that any man could arrive at the point of questioning his own existence, although he alone has direct knowledge of it, or of regarding it as the product of an exterior nature, which we can recognize only indirectly, through the agency of that very intellect the existence of which is denied."

Feuerbach, Moleschott, Haeckel, and others have all failed to solve the problem how self-consciousness can possibly be the product of innumerable atoms and of their innumerable oscillations, how these can give rise to the sense of individuality possessed by every human being, who even in old age knows himself to be the same person as in his youth.

If we are told that the soul is a harmony of various mechanical forces and sense attractions, we must still assume the existence of some one power that harmonizes the different notes and does not merely collect and store up the impressions of the senses, but co-ordinates, compares, and distinguishes them, arranges them as concepts, and these again as judgments. Such a power cannot be subject to the laws and changes of matter. Their unwillingness to recognize God's creative might leads men to ascribe an unreasonable and miraculous force to the brain substance, for they assume that it is able to arrange the sense perceptions as fast as they present themselves, to assign them to separate cells, to protect them against intrusion and disturbance, to renew them at will, and also to mingle them, so as to produce sound ideas and judgments. In ascribing to the brain the ability to think of what is abstract, to decide freely in favor of what is moral or spiritual, in spite of the conflict of sensible emotions, to retain the same thoughts, aims, knowledge, and consciousness in spite of its own continued liability to change, and finally amidst all kinds of impulses and circumstances to recognize itself affected by such impulses and circumstances, the rejection of divine creation forces the attribution of positively preposterous faculties to the brain.

It is impossible for even the body, with its wonderful organism, its limbs and its manifold activities, conditioning and supplementing one another, to have been produced or to be preserved exclusively by the physico-chemical forces of matter. Many scientists of all nationalities, realizing the action of light, heat, electricity, and magnetism in both organic and inorganic substances, did not attempt to trace the wonderful phenomenon of organic life to these forces alone, but assume the existence, over and above them, of a "vital force," whereas they would have done better to inquire for the soul which renders superfluous any other vital force.

E. F. von Gorup-Besanez, a renowned chemist, says that he "cannot help recognizing in the living organism an active force which impresses upon the action of the familiar physical and chemical forces the characteristic that distinguishes organic life. This active force, peculiar to the living organism, is the ultimate cause of the aggregate of phenomena which we call life, and it may be described as the *vital force*." Just think of it, such complicated mechanism needing no fuel and no driver! Only the mind can give a clue to the explanation of these processes: "It is the mind that constructs the body." These adherents of materialism would do well to study E. du Bois-Reymond's famous lecture on the limitations of natural knowledge. There was a time when the problem of self-consciousness and free-will was the point at which, in this scholar's opinion, the mechanical explanation of nature broke down; but subsequently he admitted that we are obliged to acknowledge our hopeless ignorance even as soon as we consider the fact of perception.

Personal life as opposed to impersonal matter, unity of self-consciousness as the "fixed pole in the endless succession of phenomena," free-will as opposed to sense impulses — these are the fundamental facts in our experience for which materialism cannot account by reference to the mechanism of efficient forces. By his intellect and will man manifests the vast difference between his personal individuality and a merely material existence. If the soul is independent of matter, it is not involved in the decay of matter, and since it does not owe its life to the body, its life need not be affected by the death of the body. The Danish physiologist Eschricht remarks: "If we

are agreed that the physical bears to the spiritual the same relation as the tool to the workman, then, but only then, in my opinion, the fulfilment of our hope that the spirit will survive the death of the body is consistent with the laws of living nature; for the workman does not perish with his tool."

It is an unnatural and horrible thing to desire annihilation. Every living thing struggles to preserve its life and successfully resists complete destruction, and how can the soul of man, the highest of all created beings, wish to die? Only some fatal delusion, or an unhappy consciousness of having done nothing worthy of immortality, could create a desire for a degradation low enough to long for annihilation. What is more, such rash and unworthy craving is not always genuine, and, as St. Augustine says, even a suicide, who is too cowardly to bear the burden and sorrow of life, has no intention of plunging into nothing. At the moment when he lays violent hands upon himself his spirit may be so shrouded in darkness as to wish for total destruction, but such is not the craving of his heart, which seeks only peace — the peace which in this world it has failed to find.

Not only is the soul able to continue its existence, it actually will exist, and for ever. The more the bereaved will abandon himself to sad thought, and is conscious that he thinks, he must realize the gulf between soul and matter. What value may the mind attribute to itself, if it is not to live for ever? Why has intellect the power to think of eternity if this thought is mere folly? Why do we long for eternity if such longing is self-deception?

The earth renews her beauty year after year; for thousands of years the planets have moved in their orbits, and yet neither the earth nor the planets can think, feel, or will anything; they have no knowledge of God or of themselves; they neither hope for nor dread eternity. But man thinks, feels, and hopes; he knows God and himself, he presumes and desires everlasting life. Can he, the crown of creation, be destined to live but a few years, whilst numberless other creatures endure for centuries, unchanged even in their outward form? In the few years allotted to him man accomplishes so much and perfects himself in so many ways; urged on by his natural instinct of immortality, the motive that impels us to all great

undertakings, he struggles and suffers incessantly — how can this all be in vain? How can he perish for ever with his works?

"God created man incorruptible, and to the image of His own likeness He made him" (Wisd. ii. 23). He alone in His infinite power could, if He would, reduce man to nothing, but surely to do this would be the most incomprehensible of all His works, in glaring contrast with the whole economy of His rule, and with His merciful providence. Hence Méric is mistaken in supposing that, with regard to the most important question in life, man is condemned to remain in a state of doubt, not less desolating than the anxiety he feels. He says, "The human soul is contingent, finite and imperfect, and just as it has a beginning, so like every other animate creature it may have the mysterious end of annihilation, and return to nothing." This is true only from the standpoint of God's power. Man is immortal, though not in a strictly metaphysical sense "eternal." Eternity is a state of permanence incapable of any augmentation, whereas the existence to which man looks forward, is only permanent in this sense that it continues to outlast every limit that can be assigned to it. The human soul is not eternal in the sense in which God is eternal, because it does not contain within itself the reason of its being. It is, however, a question of inferior importance whether its continued existence is due to God's will in creating it, or to His will to preserve it. As the soul is not a part but only an image of His divine Being, its capacity for life depends upon His creative will and is identical with susceptibility to the influence of His divine vital force. On the other hand the soul, being elementary, cannot participate in the decay of the body, and thus possesses in its very nature the conditions of permanence. Kant's sophistries, according to which the soul's elementary nature can be neither strictly proved nor absolutely denied, have been the cause of the aversion felt by educated men to proofs of immortality based on the nature of the soul. A great many philosophers of inferior rank, unable to resist the attractions of a phenomenist philosophy, went an important step farther and sought with specious arguments to make the very idea of immortality appear monstrous, and even immoral.

The possibility of the soul's continued existence becomes a *certainty* when we reflect that annihilation forms no part of the

Creator's design (Wisd. xi. 25). Moreover, that God has guaranteed the soul against death, and impressed upon her the mark of immortality, is proved irrefutably by the universal consciousness of mankind. In view of this intuitive assurance of life the greatest philosophers of the Christian era have decisively upheld the theory that reason, by its own powers and aids, is capable of proving the immortality of the soul.

The animal, that in a limited time attains its end, may die, for it has done with life; but man, with unlimited capacity for development and infinite energy, cannot wholly die; annihilation would be for him unnatural. In his soul are desires, impulses, and needs which, because common to all mankind, must be regarded as innate in and essential to human nature. They cannot be eradicated, and they exert an irresistible influence, but are never and nowhere completely satisfied in this life. Consequently they demand the prospect of another life, in which the cravings, unsatisfied here, may be fully appeased. If there were no such life after death the bitter complaints hurled by pessimists at the Creator of human nature would indeed be justified. This evidence, which we may describe as psycho-teleological, underlies and summarizes all other proofs of immortality. Those derived from the consciousness of continued existence, from the necessary requirements of truth, virtue, and compensation, are but various forms of this one universal argument, and all ultimately revert to it.

The predominant desire of every human heart is to obtain perfect, and consequently perpetual, happiness. This is the aim and object of every individual; it stimulates all workers, scholars, and artists; it makes rulers wear or abdicate their crowns; it is sought by the good and the bad alike. An animal has no such craving, but man *must* desire happiness, and cannot do otherwise.

Yet no earthly possessions or temporal prosperity satisfy him. Such things attract him as long as he sees them from afar, but they lose their charm on closer acquaintance. Though he has acquired the millions of which he dreamt, a man is still poor and discontented; the enjoyment of coveted pleasures soon causes weariness; the gain of worldly honors only brings with it other ambitions. Gratification begets disgust, and enthusiastic delights are soon followed by weariness. The battle with

life for a few years is sure to produce discontent with one's lot, and when a man at the end of his days strikes the balance and judges life by the standard of earthly joys, he will surely confess a deficit, because he has not received the inward happiness which the prospect promised. Despite all his aversion to pessimistic melancholy, he will be forced to assent to Solomon's condemnation of the vanity of all earthly things. The barometer of happiness has not stood always at "Fair Weather"; and over and over again it began to fall on the very day when his fortunes seemed highest. Whether Tiberius, who wallowed in luxury and lust, or the victims of his tyranny suffered more is a question not yet answered by historians. Every age has raised the lamentation which Sophocles expresses in one of his choruses: "In the past, in the future, and now, this law ever holds good: never in life is happiness pure and unmixed with suffering."

Philip of Macedon was alarmed when three messages of good fortune were brought him at the same time. Our minds, in spite of their constant desire for happiness, are so imbued with the conviction that all earthly happiness is fleeting and sorrow inevitable, that some mysterious instinct seems to warn us to fear moments of undisturbed bliss as omens of approaching misfortune, and to say with mournful foreboding, "It is too good to last."

Pessimism has prepared a painful surprise for those who, carried away by the delusions of modern thought, abandoned the supreme, eternal, and personal God in favor of the All One of Materialism, and transferred the aim and value of existence from eternity to time, thus building their happiness on the shifting sands of this world. These men are recalled from their Eden of pleasant dreams to the desert of stern realities, of poverty and of death. "In things both great and small," says Schopenhauer, "life is a continued disappointment. It fails to do what it promises, unless it be to show us how undesirable is the object of our desires. The charm of distance reveals to us paradises, that vanish like optical illusions. Happiness is always either in the past or in the future, and the present resembles a gloomy cloud driven by the wind across the sunlit plain; before and behind it all is bright, but the cloud itself always casts a shadow." "Life is a business that does not

pay its way." These words are the motto of modern pessimism.

The adherents of modern, pessimistic philosophy succeed admirably in describing the misery of life, but they need not boast of having discovered this misery, for the ancients knew it well enough. Heraclitus mourned over it, and men in every age have made it the theme of their lamentations. No one can pass through life without soon realizing the misery of this vale of tears, and even the few who enjoy permanent prosperity must be incredibly dull and frivolous, as well as utterly heartless, if they can shut their eyes and ears to the woes of others, or who enhance their own comfort by mockery of the victims.

What compensation is offered by the apostles of unbelief to the unhappy mortals whom they have robbed of all hope of immortality and of all prospect of reconciling natural disposition with subsequent development, desires with gratification, and efforts with results, since all confidence in God and divine providence is destroyed by them?

Let us turn first to David Friedrich Strauss, who was intolerant of half measures, and who with honest, though appalling audacity draws the logical conclusions of the "new faith." After leaving nothing of the Bible but the cover, nothing of Christ but a noble enthusiast, nothing of man but an atom of the universe that he exalted to the position of God, Strauss, a few years before his death, summed up in a kind of testament the dread results of his prolific and destructive work. Let us see how he balanced the old and the new faith. He wrote as follows: "The loss of faith in Providence is indeed one of the most painful sacrifices involved in the renunciation of Christianity. We contemplate the huge machine that we call the universe, with its cogged wheels whirling round and its heavy hammers and rams crashing down with deafening noise, and amidst this awful din we stand defenceless and helpless, always in danger lest the slightest movement on our part bring us within reach of a wheel that will tear us to pieces, or of a hammer that will crush us to death. This sense of exposure to danger is terrifying, but why deceive ourselves on the subject? Our wishes will not alter the world, and our intellect shows us that the universe is in truth a machine of

this kind." The only alleviation suggested by Strauss consists in dumb submission to the iron yoke of the irrational law of nature, devoid of both heart and will. This yielding to blind and merciless necessity leads ultimately, though imperceptibly, to happiness, thanks to the kindly force of habit.

Surely any attempt to comfort a sufferer by reference to the law of necessity or the force of habit is but a sorry mockery.

Strauss has still less to offer by way of compensation for the loss of immortality, "which," as he admits, "lights up the gloom of this earthly night with the prospect of endless life in heaven." He says: "I may be asked for a long statement regarding the compensation offered by our cosmogony for the traditional faith in immortality, but a very short reply must suffice. Whoever cannot accommodate himself to these facts is incapable of being helped, and he is not mature enough to look at things from our standpoint, so we can do nothing but refer him to Moses and the prophets."

This surely is a bald confession of absolute despair. Whoever is distressed by doubt will do better to turn to God for assistance, than to abandon his soul to the demon of unbelief. The taste for the beautiful in nature and art, travels, delight in the gifts of the muses, etc., are privileges of the leisured classes, but they can no more satisfy the craving of the heart than a drop of water can fertilize the desert. Strauss discovers in scientific and aesthetic pleasures a stimulus to mind and temperament, imagination and wit, which cannot be surpassed. "Thus we walk and live in enjoyment." One cannot help asking whether he himself ever knew what happiness was. In the same way "the atmosphere to which our great poets transport us and the ocean of harmony produced by our great composers" are spheres "where all earthly sorrow vanishes, and every blemish is removed as by magic," but these spheres, too, are accessible to comparatively few, for what does the working man know of poets and composers? If he, being poor and uneducated, were obliged to give up his "foolish" belief in immortality, why should he not arrange another scheme of life for himself than Strauss's programme, which consigns him to work, sorrow, want, pain, and sickness?

Like Strauss so do E. Dühring, B. Carneri, and other leaders of "ethical culture," advise sufferers to seek consolation in hu-

manity as a whole and in their sense of association; they bid each individual esteem himself happy if he is able to work for the welfare of future generations. It is doubtful, however, whether men will regard such final aim and destiny as a sufficient reward for the sacrifices they are called upon to make. F. von Hellwald, a fanatical advocate of the modern theory of life, is the author of a History of Civilization, in which he traces all the progress made in civilization to the stimulus of hunger and carnal desire. He concludes with the following gloomy foreboding: "Science has torn asunder the veil cast over the future and caught sight of the end awaiting mankind. It may be in some very distant future, but still it will, according to the dictum of science, inevitably come to pass that carbonic acid and water will be used up, and all organic life, including the human race, will cease to exist. The struggle of the natural forces and elements, the battle for existence among living beings will cease. Then the earth, bereft of her atmosphere and living inhabitants, will still circle round the sun in a state of desolation, like that of the moon; but the human race with its civilization, aims, efforts, creations, and ideals will have ended its existence. And what was it for?"

In this last question the author, since he fails to give the answer, reveals the absolute failure of his nihilistic theories and the barrenness of the consolation offered by those who deny immortality. Rochell remarks that Hellwald would have done well to omit his question, since it is certain to raise in the mind of even an unsuspicious reader a distrust of these views.

F. W. Wundt, renowned for his works on Ethics, pronounces intolerable any suggestion "that the human race with all its intellectual and moral achievements should vanish, leaving absolutely nothing behind, not even a memory in any mind. Consequently, in every case where limits are assigned to individual existence, we look beyond it, and rejoice in the hope of the future awaiting the great social communities to which we belong, and with which we labor for more permanent moral aims. And if these communities also disappear from our gaze, as we look forward to the future, we may still rest assured that the moral aims, in which ultimately all that is individual will be absorbed, will never pass away."

Others find consolation in the thought that a mourner may

turn from the grave of a friend and consider the immeasurable cataclysm of the universe, and lest such a consideration should overwhelm the mind, Carneri suggests a safeguard that is not yet perhaps as well known as it deserves to be. He says: "Whoever has laid in the grave what was dearest to him on earth, and realizes that some day his people, the beautiful world, and the system of which it forms part must all likewise perish, but has learnt to draw comfort in his affliction from the rigid impartiality of the law of causation, is on good terms with death, whom he knows to be inexorable, and he feels no repugnance to surrendering the whole universe to him." It is rather surprising to learn that such an argument is considered sufficiently cogent to encourage us to defy all vicissitudes and to uplift the banner of life, condemning suicide as a cowardly act of desertion. How can anything destined to perish for ever be a worthy object of human endeavor? Must not all our energy and desire to live fade utterly away?

The nihilistic conception of life inevitably leads to contempt of life, and to the idea of suicide, against which, in moments of weakness, despondency, and grief, fatalistic resignation is powerless.

Once we have ceased to be, the course of worldly events will concern us as little as it did before we came into being. Lucretius was more logical than are his modern admirers when he wrote (III, 828, etc.): "Therefore death is nothing to us and concerns us not a whit, if indeed the soul's nature is mortal. Just as in time past we felt no alarm when the Carthaginians came from all sides to attack us . . . so, when we no longer exist, and when the cleavage of body and soul, of which we are made, has taken place, nothing at all can happen to us or rouse our emotions, for we shall then not have any being."

E. von Hartmann, the philosopher of the *Unconscious,* has also nothing to offer by way of substitute for faith in immortality. Unlike Strauss, he attaches very little importance to the achievements of civilization or to scientific, æsthetic, technical, political, and social progress as means of increasing human happiness. "People," he says, "living in a state of nature are not more miserable but happier than highly civilized nations; the poor and uneducated are more blessed than the rich and cultured; the fools are luckier than the wise; in short

every one is happier in proportion as the activity of his nervous system is less, because he experiences more pleasure than displeasure, and his capacity for illusions is greater." According to Hartmann the apparently enviable temperament of modern pessimists lies in the fact that these "more highly gifted natures" argue themselves into a state of "holy (!?) discontent" and "of fury, which tends to produce a grim humor worthy of Mephistopheles, and which looks down with a mixture of suppressed pity and open contempt upon all who fancy themselves happy, as well as upon those who are plunged in misery." They feel but scorn for a soul in its struggles with destiny, in its search for one last means of escape from this hell. When these "more highly gifted natures" have attained such a degree of fury they can enjoy "the carnival of existence" on this "dull ball of clay," and endure "with exulting pessimism" the "repulsive foolery" that is described as life.

What consolation, however, is there for the millions who are led on by the will-o'-the-wisp of hope from one illusion and consequent deception to another, and who are not in a position to temper their fury by means of a "grim humor worthy of Mephistopheles," or "supreme irony"? The prophet of the "religion of the future" abandons such persons mercilessly to their misery and to the "Unconscious" in its "all-Oneness," whose blind will is, in his opinion, "the most foolish thing imaginable," and thus he bars "their last means of escape from that hell." On this point the earlier pessimists, wishing to preserve a mode of escape from universal despair, display more logic and mercy. E. von Hartmann carries his Mephistophelian contempt to the farthest possible point when he addresses a man struggling in vain for happiness with these words: "To whom do you direct your petition for happiness? How do you justify it? Have you any right to be happy? No, you have none, nor is it your duty to endure pain and suffering without resistance. . . . You want happiness because you want it, and as long as you desire it, you seek what will gratify your desire. You do not perceive that your unreasoning will is making a fool of your reason. . . . Let us have either a paradise with houris or Nirvana." It would be difficult to forgive even a pagan cynic for using such heartless and contemptuous language!

What is Nirvana? Something midway between being and not being, devised to suit the need and taste of men surfeited with pleasure, overcome with ennui and weariness of life. The prospect of such a dim semblance of life after death can never satisfy a man whose mind, will, and sensations are healthy. He wants none of the euphemistic deception with which the decrepit voluptuary pretends to see in a pitiful old age a state of transition to a restful realm of shades.

Von Hartmann is honest enough to assign to Christian religion and virtue the highest place in the scale of happiness, yet he considers that all who find comfort in the hope of everlasting life are victims to selfish deception: "The draft on the future life, which is supposed to compensate us for the misery of existence, has but one defect, — place and date of payment are fictitious."

How does he know this? Exact observation has never yet surveyed the hereafter, and therefore a Christian may be forgiven for laughing at such assertions and regarding them as reckless leaps beyond the safe limits of research into the abyss of the unknown. He personally is assured that his draft on the future life will some day be honored. Indeed, he has in hand a payment on account, namely, the overpowering happiness proceeding from his hope of immortality, to him a token of his higher origin, supporting and strengthening him in all trials, and, like the meal and the oil of the widow of Sarepta, never diminishing. Merely to please a fashion that claims to be enlightened, and struts in the garb of philosophy, advertising its own wares, no Christian will ever abandon his priceless gift of heaven in exchange for the boasted Nirvana.

Sir Humphrey Davy, an eminent scientist, writes: "The influence of religion outlives all earthly enjoyments, and becomes stronger as the organs decay and the frame dissolves. It appears as that evening star of light in the horizon of life, which, we are sure, is to become in another season a morning star, and it throws its radiance through the gloom and shadow of death." (*Consolations in Travel,* dial. 4 *ad fin.*)

Materialists, pessimists, and pantheists may praise their special brands of Nirvana, but they can never reconcile the human will, with its ineradicable love of life, to the inexorable law of death. The hope of living on in our works and in the

memory of our friends and fellow countrymen affords but poor consolation, for how can our works benefit us if we have to leave them behind? What do we gain by being famous among posterity if we cannot enjoy our future honors, and our own personality ceases to exist? Our will to live aims at its preservation; our impulse to strive for happiness impels us to purify, enlarge, and enrich our own selves. One who can calmly entertain the idea of being obliged hereafter to lose himself in the infinity of the universe, as a drop of water is lost in the ocean, that person has not yet attained to full self-consciousness, for, were this the case, he must inevitably wish to live on. No one who conscientiously affirms the beginning of his existence can deny its continuance; and no one who dares to believe in himself can help believing also in the permanence of his personality. Our thirst for happiness, as universal and irresistible as our will to live and as the death of the body, would be a meaningless torture if it led to dry cisterns and not to the source of living water. The aim of our natural efforts is not the destruction but the purification and completion of the *ego,* the raising of our individuality to an ideal development, the foundations of which are provided.

Unless we are certain of living on, life becomes a torment, the world a wilderness, the universe a chaos. Even for an unbeliever work and good deeds, the consciousness of duty loyally discharged, the reward of natural virtue, may make the path through life pleasant and easy; but whatever in this gratification is genuine and lasting points to a better world and to immortality. Nothing but belief in future happiness can force the melancholy that assails us to give place to a cheerful view of existence. The only remedy for despair, the only salvation for the prodigal son, lies in the return to his father's house, where he may rest on the bosom of God.

No matter, however, how much our consciousness demands a continued personal existence, there is urged against it the analogy with the rest of the natural order. Nature is concerned only with the preservation of the species, and allows individuals to perish and be replaced by others; she has even permitted some kinds of animals to die out completely, and consequently she might be expected to wipe out completely the existence of the individuals of the human race. As a matter

of fact each of us has to leave his sphere of action without being asked whether he has reached his full development, whether he has made the most of his talents and powers, or realized his plans and aspirations. If he is cut off prematurely he may, according to Strauss, claim to live on just the number of years of which he has been robbed.

If man were only a natural product, like other creatures, he would be subject to the laws governing natural life, and could look for no other realization of even his loftiest aspirations than such as is possible within the limited scope of his earthly existence and the process of nature. In this case he would be incomparably more miserable than any other living being. He, the crown of all creation, might truly complain of receiving harsh treatment at the hands of nature, since, being exposed to the cycle of generation and dissolution, he would be a victim of the most horrible contradiction. In every other creature there is a harmony between impulses and aims, but in man there would be a perpetual strife between what he desires to reach and that which is actually within his power of attainment. All his impulse and longing would be directed towards what is perfect and infinite, and yet his powers would be restricted to the low sphere of the imperfect and finite.

An animal is perfect as soon as it is fully developed, but man can never be fully developed in this world. The animal soul, possessing neither reason nor free-will, recognizes and desires only what tends to the preservation and propagation of bodily life; it feels no aspiration after perfection, knows nothing of development and progress, and therefore has no history. The mind of man turns to the supernatural and permanent, and beholds from afar a glorious goal, for which it longs and towards which it struggles with all the energy of its free will. An animal cannot conceive itself to be an individual, nor does it realize itself as a personality, and this lack of real self indicates that by its nature the animal soul cannot claim immortality, nor is the completeness of the universe affected by its annihilation; whereas the human mind realizes that it is the entelechy which controls, moves, and governs the body, and which, despite its dependence upon the natural life, yet has a true individual existence, asserts an independent and constant actuality amidst the multitude of phenomena, and remains in

all the changes and fluctuating fortunes of life conscious of its being superior to what is finite and temporal.

"The soul," says Burdach, "is at first in a latent state amalgamated with the bodily life; her awakening marks the beginning of her release from it, and during the whole course of her life her development consists in increased separation from the life of the body and more definite self-consciousness. This severance continues to become greater until old age is reached, when the bodily organs no longer obey the soul, and her final deliverance from the body culminates in death. Man in a rude state is concerned only with outward things, but as he advances in education he learns to reflect and to distinguish his *ego* from his body, and thus he arrives at the idea of his physical continuance after death. . . . In those of his moments when he rises to profound meditation and ecstasy, when the soul is altogether plunged into herself, her distinctness from the bodily life and things of sense becomes even more apparent."

Our mind postulates immortality, as we have seen, by the very nature of its being and activity. But whence does it derive an absolute guarantee that this requirement will be fulfilled? From its relation to God. St. Augustine remarks that the soul is the life of the body, and God is the life of the soul. Religion, the recognition of God as the Author and Finisher of our nature, is the soil in which certainty of immortality roots deepest. We find compensation for dependence upon the conditions of natural life in the knowledge that we are God's children, and this fact gives us assurance that all our craving for continued individual existence and attainment of individual perfection will be satisfied. Every nation has perceived, at least dimly, that God is the beginning and end of all being and the Father of mankind, and at least a faint anticipation of eternal life finds expression in the religions of all peoples. The belief in God is invariably accompanied by the belief in immortality, whereas a denial of God is inseparable from the vision of mankind's doom to destruction. Whoever believes in a personal, living God, and hence derives his own personal existence from the creative Source of all life, cannot undertake his own negation. He knows that God willed man to be made in His image, and this includes the permanence of being. We rely not upon nature, but upon the Creator of nature, and as

soon as we acknowledge Him to be both the Author and the aim of our being, we feel an assurance of our immortality, which no doubt can shatter.

God, who is unchanging and faithful, kind, loving, and just, cannot sever His connection with man, cannot deny His children on earth. Our merciful Father in heaven, who implanted in us a desire for eternal life, cannot for ever leave that desire unsatisfied. How can it be possible that the yearning for happiness that dwells in the depths of our hearts, and becomes more intense as years roll by, could remain for ever unfulfilled? Can it be that our whole existence is nothing but a series of disappointments, disillusions, failures, suffering? Is the soul merely a plaything, tossed to and fro between hope and fear, and never really happy? Is our craving for happiness a long sigh, destined to die unheard and unheeded when we breathe our last? If so, the hope of immortality implanted in us is the most cruel of all deceptions. But God is not the kind of father who would offer His children a stone instead of bread, a scorpion instead of fish. Faith in God supplies the most satisfactory answer to the question of immortality. We believe that God in His wisdom and love intends the universe to have some meaning, and that the reason for what exists must be sought in what ought to be. Otherwise life would be an insoluble problem, and for most of us an unspeakable misfortune. Then, indeed, as Zeus says in the *Iliad,* man would be the most deserving of pity of all earthly creatures, and the pessimism of Schopenhauer and Hartmann would be the truest philosophy.

Of our idea of God nothing would remain but the name, devoid of meaning. Without a belief in personal immortality, as Max Müller aptly remarks, "religion is like an arch resting on one pillar, or like a bridge ending in an abyss." (*Chips from a German Workshop,* p. 45, ed. 1868.)

Hence the idea of immortality is essential to every religion and is a natural expression of the religious consciousness. There is no religion which does not offer to its adherents some kind of equation between the desires and the destinies of life; and this helps them to bear misfortune in this world, for it carries human existence beyond the confines of earth, and promises men a share in the life of the living God.

This is why Christianity, which lays hold most firmly on the

idea of God as a person and a spiritual substance, attaches an importance to the hope of immortality so great, that Leibnitz was induced to say Christ established belief in another life with the power of a legislator, and thus created the religion of humanity. Our conviction of the soul's continued existence is based on our belief in God, and so we can understand why a Christian hardly needs evidence in support of this truth. Ever since the foundation of Christianity it is a fact that acceptance of its doctrines has been rewarded with a firm conviction of everlasting life, and at the present time every manifestation of the spirit of the age shows plainly that belief in the continued existence of the individual increases or diminishes in proportion as men's attitude towards Christianity is more or less friendly. Among the pagan philosophers many admitted that belief in the continued existence of the soul is indispensable to human nature, and a logical result of sound thought, but only a few attained to perfect certainty, free from all doubt and wavering, on this all-important subject. Non-Christian nations have not advanced beyond more or less vague fancies regarding a future life. Whoever recognizes himself as a personality, raised above all other beings, inasmuch as he is made in God's image, and knows that he is made for his own sake as well as for others, and, moreover, is conscious of himself, and feels within himself the breath of divine, everlasting life, — he can never doubt that his own life will last for ever. Bishop Fénelon was so thoroughly convinced of this truth that he ventured to say, "Even if the soul were material, this would be no obstacle to her immortality." Such a remark proves the firmness of a Christian's faith. The warm breath of life pervades Christianity, and the promise of life everlasting affects our whole theory of life and forms the substance of the Christian revelation. God is life, and a Christian possesses life, and will possess it for ever. "Every one who seeth the Son and believeth in Him will have life everlasting" (John vi. 40). "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, although he be dead, shall live; and every one that liveth and believeth in Me shall not die for ever" (John xi. 25, 26). "We hope in the living God" (1 Tim. iv. 10). In consequence of our living with Christ, the conviction of our personal immortality becomes, as it were, a matter of inward experience.

Only one thing can make the hard law of life endurable and that is the conviction that we were not born to die, but to live on. For man destined for immortal life there is no problem without a solution, no apparent contradiction that cannot be harmonized. In the splendor of eternal light the existence of mankind appears as a picture bright with happiness, on which the sorrows of this world paint the indispensable touches of shadow.

Pitiable rather than enviable are unbelievers, who "have said, reasoning with themselves, but not right: 'The time of our life is short and tedious and in the end of a man there is no remedy, and no man hath been known to have returned from hell. For we are born of nothing and after this we shall be as if we had not been, for the breath in our nostrils is smoke, and speech a spark to move our heart. Which being put out, our body shall be ashes, and our spirit shall be poured abroad as soft air. . . . Come therefore and let us enjoy the good things that are present . . . let us fill ourselves with costly wine and ointments, and let not the flower of the time pass by us. Let us crown ourselves with roses, before they be withered . . . let none of us go without his part in luxury; let us everywhere leave tokens of joy; for this is our portion and this our lot. Let us oppress the poor just man and not spare the widow, nor honor the grey hairs of the aged. But let our strength be the law of justice . . . let us therefore lie in wait for the just, because he is contrary to our doings and upbraideth us with transgressions of the law. . . . He is grievous to us even to behold, . . . let us see then if his words be true . . . let us examine him by outrages and tortures . . . let us condemn him to a most shameful death.' — These things they thought and were deceived, for their own malice blinded them, and they knew not the secrets of God, nor hoped for the wages of justice, nor esteemed the honor of holy souls. For God created man incorruptible, and to the image of his own likeness He made him" (Wisd. ii).

One who denies immortality can never be at peace, for he is never safe from fear of death. If he doubts the truth of his opinions he dreads being called to account for them, and if he believes not in the continued life of the soul, he has no comfort in misfortune and no joy in prosperity. If this dreary existence

with its ignorance, misery, and sin were not illumined by the sunshine of eternity life would be a curse to the poor, the sick, and the downtrodden, and for the few who are favorites of fortune the prospect of death would embitter all their happiness. He who is without hope of another life is worse off than a beast, which feels no anxiety as to its end. "Man when he was in honor did not understand; he is compared to senseless beasts, and is become like to them" (Ps. xlviiii. 13).

. . .

Let us contemplate a little further the terrible void revealed to us by the idea of complete annihilation, and we shall see that as many depths of misery we discover so many reasons for our faith will become apparent. Without the guarantee of immortality our desire for perfect knowledge and high moral principles would be torture, our conscience unnatural, our fear of retribution ridiculous, and the universality, constancy, necessity, and efficacy of the thought of life beyond the grave an inexplicable phenomenon.

Malebranche remarked that truth is the bread of the mind. The majority of mankind seem, indeed, not to feel a hunger for this bread as keenly as they feel hunger for bodily food, and there are comparatively few who seek truth for its own sake, and who do not desist from the quest, however weary they may become. The thirst for knowledge is forgotten amidst the care to supply the needs of the body, and interest in the supernatural flags unduly. The more our attention is directed towards the world without, with its occupations and enjoyments, the less do we think of the world within, and our real selves. It is an unquestioned and unavoidable fact that when we run to and fro in search of earthly possessions we forget the more precious things, those we cannot see, taste, or touch. Many act as if they had a head only for the sake of their stomach, and they look upon a good dinner as the supreme purpose of life. Of such it may truly be said that their God is their belly, but perhaps some day they will find that a keen desire for knowledge can make one forget even pain and hunger.

This desire is felt not only by scholars and scientists, but by every child who asks his nurse to tell him a fairy tale, by every frivolous woman who seeks distraction in novels or at the

theatre, and by idlers who contrive to exist without work, but not without newspapers and magazines — perhaps they would be attracted by this unique drama, which fascinates the spectators by its novelty, majesty, and splendor, if only they could gain admission without the practice of virtue. However this may be, a disposition and secret impulse to acquire some higher knowledge and to ponder over the supernatural is innate in us all, even though outwardly we spend our time in idleness, in amusements, or in incessant money making. To the man of the world, whose only aim appears to be to kill time, and no less to the poor laborer, whose life is spent in monotonous toil for bare necessaries, there occur sometimes the great problems of the soul, and they ask themselves the old questions regarding the origin and aim of human life, the existence of God, and immortality. God, the soul, immortality, and retribution are words which make themselves heard even in the turmoil of every-day life with its labor, sorrows, and delights, and find an echo even in men who are spiritually and morally debased. These words demand admittance to the mind the more forcibly, the more violently one seeks to silence them.

Jouffroy, a French sceptic, makes the absurd assertion that man will attain to peace of mind only if he clearly perceives that, and why, truth is beyond his reach. May a sick person be supposed to derive consolation from the information that his malady is incurable, and why this is the case? Seneca tells us, "If I were never to be admitted to possession of the truth, it would not be worth while for me to be born." H. von Kleist, a poet whose study of materialistic philosophy plunged him into scepticism, wrote to his relatives shortly before his melancholy end as follows: "With our understanding we are unable to decide whether what we term truth be indeed truth, or only appears to be so. Consequently my one great aim has vanished." He doubted and despaired of God, the world, and himself, and ended his life by his own hand.

In this world no one possesses and enjoys full knowledge; we can take but a few drops from the vast ocean of truth, and they lose their clearness as we touch them. The noblest but also the bitterest fruit of all temporal knowledge is our recognition of the fact that we know nothing. "In much wisdom there is much indignation, and he that addeth knowledge, add-

eth also labôr" (Eccles. i. 18). Sir Isaac Newton's modest statement is well known; he says: "I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea-shore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me" (*Life*, by Brewster, p. 303, ed. 1875).

All visible nature bears the traces of Almighty God, and to every thinking man it reveals His image, but His action is veiled in mystery, dark clouds obscure Him, and storms drown the tones of His voice. Here below all knowledge is deficient, and we realize this more fully when the light of reason and faith shines brightly. Some day the hour must come when man, the image of Him who is truth, will enter once for all upon the splendor of divine truth; were it otherwise, we should be disowned by Him who made us like Himself. As soon as death draws aside the curtain which hides the eternal light, our spirit will behold the supreme Object of its cognition, not through a glass in a dark manner, but face to face; not from afar, but close at hand; no longer merely in the work of creation or the word of revelation, but as He really is. Then all clouds and mists will vanish, and the countenance of the Most High will thenceforth be ever present to the spirit. The Author of all things, the Source of all perfection and happiness, will suffer the soul to gaze into the unfathomable abyss of His Being and to penetrate His secrets, so that it perceives itself and all creation as in a mirror. How intense will be its astonishment and delight when, in place of types, parables, and pictures, it enters upon full cognition, and faith is changed to sight!

But not only the possession of truth, but also the acquisition of virtue is the instinctive striving of man, even though original sin gave him an inclination to evil. Conscience, which rebukes even the desire to sin, hypocrisy, which, as Bossuet says, is "the homage paid by vice to virtue," and the reverence which purity extorts even in spite of ourselves, all show clearly the moral side of our destiny. And since this is not fully attained on earth, it demands another life to complete our moral perfection.

The painful conflict between our desires and duties, and the

sensual inclinations and numberless other obstacles which passion puts in the way of our moral development, can be accounted for and endured only from the point of view that they are intended to educate us, and to spur us on to persevere in our efforts to gain possession of those treasures which neither rust nor moth can consume.

The blessed dead are free from the assaults of concupiscence, they have put off the "body of sin" and are released from the law in their members which resisteth the law of the spirit. All strife is over, and the painful discord between knowledge and volition, duty and inclination, has given place to a delightful harmony of all faculties and desires. The just are at rest from all warfare, safe from all dangers and temptations, and so firmly established in perfect sanctity that they cannot stumble or fall, nor incur any stain. Their charity is as vast as is their knowledge; they will whatever God wills, they love whatever God loves, and for His sake alone. The day must come when this perfect service of God must begin, for it is the continuation, completion and reward of the service of God here on earth.

Take away the belief in the continued existence of the soul as a personal, self-conscious being, and there will be no meaning in the fear of retribution, and the desire for a perfect correlation between morality and happiness; even conscience, which tells us of a judgment beyond the grave, is unnatural and illusory. It is, therefore, this moral consciousness that preserves among nations faith in the immortality of the soul. Like knowledge of God, with which it is inseparably connected, it is an inborn, inalienable possession of the human race. Just as atheists have never succeeded in discovering a nation totally devoid of religion, so no one has ever found a tribe devoid of conscience and morality. History and anthropology both bear witness to the fact that morality, based on thoughts of God and immortality, is common to all human beings. Perfect absence of all morality, in conjunction with open contempt and denial of conscience, is not the characteristic of a low stage of civilization, but, like absolute lack of all religion, it is the outcome of that false culture which distorts and disfigures human nature. A savage is not a model of virtue, but neither is he the fiend described by superficial observers. He has his own in-

dividual virtues and vices, and his very refusal to look upon every European as a paragon of virtue shows that he is quite able to judge things from a moral standpoint. Could a red Indian draw up an indictment of the morals of the pale-face he would be justified in imputing to him crimes of which, according to a widespread theory, only men in the savage state could be guilty. Even among the most moral nations of antiquity, and among the greatest pagans famous for their virtuous life, moral consciousness was occasionally obscured, but the idea of a supernatural Creator and Guardian of the moral order is the inheritance of even the most degraded human races.

Each man hears in his own conscience the voice of a supreme Lord and Lawgiver, who will eventually be his Judge. This Ruler's commands are absolute and He tolerates no argument and no opposition. In spite of all resistance, conscience fetters and tortures the guilty soul; it cannot escape, and the more it struggles, the greater is its suffering; it realizes that an all-seeing eye is watching it, and it trembles before the judgment that awaits it on the threshold of the world to come.

A vicious soul is a ledger in which the recording angel makes his entries, and the slave of evil is obliged to drag his torturer about with him, so that to some extent he pays the penalty for his sins even here; although there are means of appeasing his enemy. On the other hand it is in the soul of a just man that peace abides. But is this the only compensation for all the injustice, insults, sacrifices, privations, and struggles that he undergoes for the purifying and testing of his virtue? As long as any doubt remains as to the gratification of his desire for justice he is uneasy and afflicted in mind.

Earthly justice is one-sided; it punishes, but does not reward; it is concerned with sinful actions, but never touches sinful dispositions, which are the root of all evil. Thus the soul must live on after death, in order to suffer the full punishment, or receive the full reward, that it deserves. In the Fourth Book of *Émile* Rousseau writes: "If the soul is not material, it can survive the body, and if it survive it, Providence is justified. Even though I possessed no other proof that the soul is immaterial than the triumph of evil and the oppression of the just

in this world, this alone would prevent me from questioning it. So flagrant a contradiction, so horrible a discord in the universal harmony would impel me to remove it, and I should say to myself: 'Everything does not end for us with life; everything will be set right at death.'" (Vol. III. p. 69, ed. 1824.)

A just man receives his reward as soon as faith gives place to sight, and hope to possession, and charity has attained her end, and thus enjoys peace and happiness, so that the soul, like a child on its mother's bosom, rests in God's embrace, and obtains compensation a thousand-fold for the world that it has lost, with all its sorrows and sufferings. The heart of man is capable of loving the Infinite, and so only the possession and enjoyment of God can completely fill it and satisfy its craving. God, the aim of all virtuous actions, is also their reward, thus effecting perfect harmony between virtue and happiness.

Some philosophers, who deny the immortality of the soul, try to account for the disproportion existing between virtue and happiness by the hedonism of men like Epicurus, Lucretius, Helvetius, Jeremy Bentham, Herbert Spencer, and others. One of these lays down the dictum, "Knowledge is courage." Unhappily at the present day very little courage is needed by one who repeats the pernicious theory that selfishness in some form or other or personal advantage is the only motive of moral action, and the foundation of genuinely human morality, and that there is no need of religion. Relying upon the superficiality and materialism that characterize the present tendency of thought, men boldly attempt by fine words to reconcile virtue and happiness, but how can they succeed, if it is possible for a man of no virtue to enjoy the supreme happiness of the world? Diderot says bluntly, "Happiness is virtue," but if this were true there would be as many contradictory ideas of morality and virtue as there are various kinds of good things, the possession and enjoyment of which constitute happiness. At this rate license is no less moral than self-restraint, and a libertine is as virtuous as a man who seeks peace of mind in detachment from the world and self. We cannot raise the instinct of self-preservation to be the one sole motive for moral actions without declaring boundless selfishness to be the highest virtue. The man who sets his own *ego*, his own personal ad-

vantage, before everything else, and the cowardly deserter, who thinks only of saving his own life, would be models of perfection far superior in moral worth to the soldier who dies bravely on the field of battle. Logically, then, a dog who with a firm hold on his own bone tries to force smaller dogs to give up theirs, is performing a morally good action, but men who subordinate their instinct for self-preservation and their personal advantage to the welfare of the community are deficient in morality. From this point of view inward harmony is attained either by quibble, or by assuming that gross sensuality is as moral as self-restraint.

"The conflict between reason and will has become a fable of the past, and nature is at peace with herself." What a happy discovery! If it were true, it would bring undying fame to the man who made it, and it would deserve more praise than all the great attainments of art and industry. But St. Paul was not the first to tell us of the failure to bring reason and will, duties and tastes into accord. "For I do not that good which I will; but the evil which I hate, that I do" (Romans vii. 15) is the humiliating confession, and this failure was painfully experienced already by pagans, and felt the more acutely the more earnest was their pursuit of virtue. There is in our souls a painful discord which is reflected even in inanimate creation. Without ceasing to value goodness we are conscious of being impelled by force of habit to sin.

Besides this strife between knowledge of good and tendency to evil, there is the other one between good will and uncertainty of the moral judgment. What in ethics is designated as conflict of duties is perceptible in matters of every-day occurrence, such as care of the body and of the soul, the commandment of self-preservation and regard for family, community, and state. There is conflict between impulse and reason, indulgence and severity, mercy and justice, and the more tender a man's conscience, the more intense is the anxiety preceding or following his decision. Sleepless nights are an unavoidable addition to the day's work, especially in the case of the noblest and best among us, who are doing what they can to promote the virtue and happiness of mankind, and are often embarrassed by conscientious scruples when called upon to form decisions upon which depends the welfare of perhaps thousands.

The Positivist assertion that it is possible to be happy, and consequently moral, in every state of life, affords but slight consolation, for on the one hand millions are struggling under unfavorable conditions for the means of subsistence, and on the other hand many members of the leisured classes are neither virtuous nor contented. Only dreamers and enthusiasts fancy that an improvement in the circumstances of life, resulting from continual progress in civilization, will assure to each individual a happy and moral existence. Progress is by no means constant, but interrupted by crises and catastrophes, as the history of civilization shows plainly enough. Consequently the happiness and the virtue of millions are endangered, and the new life, which is said to spring from the ruins of the past, in its turn contains the germ of death. It is true that the general tendency of human development is to rise, and when civilized nations die out their achievements do not necessarily perish with them, but are handed on to the more vigorous races that succeed them. The advance resulting from the joint action of all the factors of civilization deserves the name of progress only if the benefits of civilization are valued and sought in their proper order, i.e., according to the measure of their necessity and significance for civilization as a whole. Materialists, who scoff at faith in God and immortality, who deny all moral ideals and regard self-seeking as the only rational motive, and pleasure as the one justifiable standard of action, tell us that they have contributed a great deal towards the civilization and happiness of mankind; but, viewed from a truly moral standpoint, we may say that their teaching is fraught with danger, and bears unmistakable signs of the decay of real civilization.

The anticipations of happiness and virtue cherished by the so-called philosophy of actuality are proved groundless by facts of history and experience. Materialistic over-estimation of culture, accompanied by its under-estimation of morality, produces that loathing for all civilization that Rousseau expressed in high-sounding phrases and Robespierre in horrible deeds of violence. Men are not made happier or more moral by being ceaselessly told that they have wonderfully developed the refinement of sensual gratification, or that they have done much to spread education and freedom. A savage in the desert is more contented, and perhaps more moral, than the proletarian,

who has been taught that he need neither hope nor fear anything in the next life, that there is no God, and that he himself is nothing but a serf or mere machine.

The irreligious view of life, which with childish credulity expects from a progress in civilization a reconciliation of virtue and happiness, and the spread of both, is actually the cause of the dangers threatening both, for it confuses the mind and weakens the moral force; it gives birth to doubt and deepens it into despair; it mocks at the belief in a higher destiny and the striving after it; it renders the masses pretentious and discontented, degrades their minds and morals, fills them with hatred of the existing order; and finally, having robbed them of their last moral support, abandons them with cold indifference to their bitter misery. Irreligion, whether it takes the guise of culture, scientific research, or progress in ethics or economics, is invariably the parent of inward distress and outward discord, hopelessness, rebellion, weariness of life, and often of suicide.

Generation after generation has hoped that a fine improvement in the moral and material conditions of life would follow from "progress," and each went to its grave with hopes unfulfilled. After many painful disappointments, as they are recorded in the history of the peoples, philosophers and statesmen should have learned that the balance between virtue and happiness cannot be adjusted in this world, however much they may perfect the conditions of life. And those who come forward as reformers and saviours of society ought to realize that the evils which they seek to eradicate are but the symptoms of an unhealthy social condition; and the most carefully planned reforms, as long as they deal only with external symptoms, cannot reach the root of the malady. The mere prospect of material gain, of education and liberty does not reconcile men with life, nor make them attach a higher value to it. Christ was neither statesman nor economist, but by His word and example, by His spirit and grace, He renewed the face of the earth. His means to make the world morally and materially better was to make the people better, to give food to their minds, comfort to their hearts, strength to their wills, and loftiness to their characters. It is only by a sincere return to the living faith in God and eternal life that modern society can

be saved; religion must be not merely taught, but be loved and practised. The warnings of history would have more effect if men would not, in consequence of their vain self-deception, invariably begin all over again to learn wisdom by their own bitter experience.

It is difficult to understand how modern ethics can suppose it possible to reconcile virtue and happiness by smooth promises of the fruits of a progress that is hostile to religion. Herbert Spencer and other writers on ethics tell us that the obligation to practise virtue becomes an impulse towards happiness, and the struggle for existence becomes a warfare for morality. The alleged law of nature, upon which this new doctrine is based, requires the warfare to be one of annihilation, since there are but two possibilities in view, — either the misery of all, or the luxury of a few.

Some high-flown moralists, infected with Stoicism and Jansenism, think that genuine morality can be seen only in the pure and unselfish virtue, induced by the love of God, but absolutely regardless of any prospect of eternal happiness. Such persons would do well to examine the character of the teachers under whose guidance they arrived at this opinion. It was Spinoza who taught that a desire for immortality is opposed to ideal morality and perfect love of God, since we ought to love Him without expecting, far less demanding, any return of love from Him.

If it is selfish to wish to live for ever, it must be selfish to wish to live at all, and therefore if the universal love of life is selfishness, life is a selfish act, and selfishness ceases to be a vice. If, on the other hand, the renunciation of eternal life is an act of self-denial, the renunciation of every life, i.e., suicide, is the act of greatest self-denial. It should be remembered that the Stoics maintained that virtue consisted in perfect indifference to, or sovereignty of, the will over all exterior experiences, including failure and misfortune, and that this teaching revenged itself upon its authors. The happiness brought about by this ostentatious virtue was not great enough to ward off thoughts of suicide when life became a burden. To a Stoic it seemed, therefore, quite permissible to put an end to his own life, and it was easy enough for him to boast of his indifference to pain, since he knew he would end it quickly

enough by a *salto mortale*. Many Stoics had recourse to this way of escape, even under circumstances less trying than those of Cato. They were proud of a triumphing which as a matter of fact was a cowardly flight, and they extolled as true heroism what appears on closer examination to be mere despair. In *Euripides,* Theseus, by insisting that self-sought death is a proof of folly and weakness, succeeds in curing Herakles of all idea of suicide.

To say: "Do good for its own sake; do your duty solely for duty's sake, love and practise virtue for the sake of virtue alone" sounds very exalted, but it is based on false assumptions, and separates man's activity from his real being. Every code of ethics must take into account the fundamental instincts of human nature and the fundamental laws of its activity. The final aim of all our exertions is perfect happiness, and the most generous disposition, the most unselfish action, and the purest virtue are subject unawares to the impulse of self-love, that is in quest of happiness. We could not even truly love God, if He were only in Himself the highest good, and not also the highest good for us. We are once for all so constituted that we cannot love anything that bears no relation to our own well-being, or that neither offers nor promises any gratification to our ineradicable craving for happiness. It is easy to denounce as base and unworthy every expectation of life beyond the grave, and to condemn as egoistic and unphilosophical all that Christianity teaches with regard to hope of happiness; but in practical life no psychological law can be overlooked with impunity.

Whilst, as we have seen, some false teachers insist upon an impossible standard of morality, others, imitating the Epicureans of old, teach the doctrine of pleasure, and say that man's highest destiny is to enjoy and make the most of life, and his one true business, in accordance with the requirements of nature and duty, is to acquire and use the good things that life affords. Ownership constitutes, they say, a right to enjoy, since it renders enjoyment safe and easy. The individual is hence exhorted to acquire as much property as he can in order to procure the maximum of the means of enjoyment. According to this theory the aim of all civil laws regulating society is to safe-guard personal liberty and enjoyment of life; the dis-

astrous but inevitable consequence of such a theory is the principle *Laissez faire, laissez passer.* Leading writers on Political Economy in the 19th Century designated this boundless self-seeking by the euphemistic term of "intelligent self-interest and personal freedom," and elevated it to the rank of a scientific axiom. Social life adapted itself readily to the laws of selfishness and lust, so that egoism, ever on the look-out for profit and pleasure, became the mainspring of human activity.

Can men so principled ever be recalled to the boasted unselfish morality? It is to be feared that the call to return to an unselfish code of ethics will fall on deaf ears. It is positively scandalous that men who ridicule the hope of immortality as unscientific, useless, and immoral, and rob people of their faith in all ideals, proceed to put on the cloak of virtue and preach the purity of morals.

In the Stoic system there is no harmony between morality and happiness; but even if such a reconciliation could be effected, it would have a value only under the condition that the Stoic conceptions of virtue and happiness were correct. This is, however, not the case. Truly virtuous is not the one who in proud self-sufficiency withdraws into himself, and either scorns or ignores all around him; such a man takes it upon himself to judge the whole world; he is not susceptible to insults, he cares nothing for the sorrows of others, his attitude towards his fellow men is expressed by the words *odi profanum vulgus et arceo,* and he regards this arrogant contempt of mankind as the highest virtue and happiness. Such self-exaltation of the *ego* may well go hand in hand with great moral defects, and it involves a far more immoral selfishness than does the expectation of a future reward, which, as we have seen, is denounced as rank egoism.

The truly virtuous man endeavors to realize his idea of moral excellence by subjecting his own will to the will of God. It is for him not enough to bring his own inward and outward life into conformity with God's commandments, but he ardently desires all men to do the same. He looks upon mankind, not as a crowd of individuals with merely an external bond of union, but as a living organism that ought to be filled with the idea of virtue and moulded in accordance with its ideal. To a Christian the fulfilment of the moral law lies in the love of

God and man, and he believes himself bound, not only to save his own soul and to secure his own happiness, but also to labor for the welfare and salvation of others; he is ready to follow the example of Christ, and if need be to lay down his life for his brethren. This charity reveals the existence of a spirit of sacrifice that is in every age the glory of Christianity. The Stoic seeks death that he may deliver his dignified self from the troubles of this life, but the Christian endures and even seeks suffering in order to live for the benefit of others. It is impossible for him to shut himself up and care nothing for the rest of the world if only he is at ease; the more thoroughly he conforms to God's will, the more painfully will he be aware of the difference between the world, as it ought to be, and the world as it is. He is happy, indeed, in the consciousness of faithfully fulfilling his duty, but still he feels the contrast between his own good will and the evil tendencies of the age; he is a zealous champion of what is right, and for this reason he has to encounter much opposition from the wicked. If corroboration be needed for this statement, we have but to consider the sentiment of those heroes of virtue who strove for justification by deeds rather than by words. What upheld these men was their faith in the invincible might of goodness, their hope in ultimate victory, and their firm conviction that a valiant soldier cannot fail to receive his crown.

What becomes of this faith, this hope and conviction, when men assume that nothing awaits them but an evolution, endless perhaps, but accomplished in this world? Here below virtue is never completely triumphant, nor does it win the recognition that it deserves. We have already seen that endless progress in this world, for ever infinitely distant from our final end, is worthless. Our opponents tell us that an individual can become moral and happy only in so far as he co-operates consciously in working towards the harmony of the universe. How few contribute to this harmony in any notable degree! And of these few there are few again who amidst all the vexations of earthly life arrive at a full enjoyment of their work in effecting it. Those who invest the largest capital often receive the smallest return.

The value of the strength and pains expended in producing the "harmony of the universe" is rendered questionable by the fact that positive happiness is admitted to be unattainable

at any stage in the world's progress, whereas misery and unhappiness abound. As the "harmony" progresses, the number of illusions is augmented, and men become aware of more bitter disappointments, whilst the disproportion between virtue and its reward appears more and more glaring. Moreover, man has significance not merely as one of a species or as a part of the universe; he is aware of his own individuality, and of being complete in himself. To suggest that he should abandon his own personality and renounce his individuality would be equivalent to proposing suicide to him as his highest aim. As long as he believes in his personal individuality, he has no right to cast aside the special duty assigned to him, viz., to realize in himself the idea of goodness and to help others to realize it. Surely it would be futile and meaningless to begin and carry on a contest on behalf of virtue if there were absolutely no hope of victory! Is the sense of participation in working for a harmony that will never exist, to be the sole reward for lifelong labor, and the only compensation for continued exertions and privations? If so, it does not seem worth the effort.

Without belief in immortality a man cannot have much interest in acquiring spiritual possessions. Du Prel says that such a belief must undoubtedly impel us not to use this life simply for the benefit of that in us which is merely apparitional, but also for that which is transcendental, in other words, for the soul rather than for the body.

In this sense Goethe remarks very aptly that no reasonable man ever questioned his immortality, for we cannot be rational if we set too low a value upon our own being and limit its existence to a few years. Jäger, a follower of Darwin, insists, with more zeal than logic, upon the importance of belief in immortality for the perfection of the individual and for the permanence of society. He can discover no better means of securing it than the Christian doctrine of the future life, which requires each man to exert himself to save his soul, i.e., to work as if he would live for ever, and to live as if he were to die that day. Jäger does not hesitate to denounce the materialistic formula "Virtue must be practised for its own sake" as "a lame and ridiculous phrase," and these words describe it accurately.

CHAPTER III

UNIVERSALITY OF THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

In dealing with the question of immortality, the agreement of men who either fear or hope for a future life is of no small importance. SENECA.

IN every age and in every country mankind has believed in the continued life of the soul.

Cultured nations of antiquity, like the Jews, Persians, Chinese, Egyptians, Babylonians, and Assyrians, would have scornfully rejected theories asserting a squalid origin and pitiable end of man such as are now applauded by so many of the present generation. These nations believed themselves to be of divine institution, and their religious traditions unanimously bear testimony to their faith in the immortality of the soul and in happiness beyond the grave. Max Müller writes (*Origin of Religion,* p. 383, 1891 ed.): "In India also, whatever may have been said to the contrary, the thoughts and feelings about those whom death has separated from us for a time supplied some of the earliest and most important elements of religion, and faith drew its first support from those hopes and imaginings of a future life and of our meeting again, which proved their truth to the fathers of our race, as they still do to us, by their very irresistibility." "This belief," says Cicero (*Quest. Tusc.* I. 22), "is common to all the ancients, who perhaps perceived the truth better, being nearer to the origin of the race and its divine ancestry." The inscriptions of burial vaults reveal this fact. We learn from them that the Egyptians thought of the other world as the "Island of the Blest," whither the dead arrived after crossing vast oceans. The judgment was held before the throne of Osiris, and if, when weighed in the balance, the departed turned the scale, they were admitted to the ranks of the blessed, who were allowed to feast their eyes on

the splendor of the sun-god Ra. Here they led a life resembling that on earth; they ploughed and reaped, but under far happier circumstances, rejoicing in the nearness of God.

Belief in the transmigration of souls is of later growth. Cicero's statement seems to favor the theory that the pagan doctrine of immortality, which formed an essential part of religion, is a fragment inherited from the first revelation. It is, however, more accurate to explain this doctrine as a natural growth, indicating an inborn need, disposition, and manner of thought on the part of rational human nature.

In spite of the decay of morality and religion in pre-Christian times, there were among the cultured nations of antiquity many upholders of the doctrine of immortality, such as Confucius, Laotse, Zoroaster, Socrates, Plato, and Cicero; but as a rule this belief was more firmly rooted in the hearts of the masses than in the heads of the philosophers. It was philosophy that first cast doubt upon the Homeric conception of a better life in the Elysian Fields, to which every righteous man looked forward. It was the advanced school of thought which had its origin in Athens and Alexandria that influenced the Epicureans, and later also the Stoics. A man could remain a Stoic and yet declare with conviction that the individual soul perishes with the body. The views of the Epicureans on the subject of life and death are briefly expressed in the inscription, "To the living there remains the feast, to the dead a memorial tablet." The Fathers and various scholastic writers reckon even Aristotle among those who deny immortality, yet it was only the vegetative and sensitive soul that he considered material and destructible, not the intellectual soul. In his books on the soul he claims for the intellectual soul continued existence, but does not give adequate proof for it. Faith in immortality prevailed, moreover, among the pagan ancestors of the Keltic, Slavonic, and especially of the Germanic nations. The last mentioned located their heaven in various places, such as Gimil, Brimir, and Sindri; heroes were admitted to Valhalla, where the god Woden entertained them with delectable food and drink.

Even nations in a very low state of civilization have preserved the hope of immortality as an encouragement on their path through life, not excepting the cave dwellers of the prehistoric age, who have left evidence of a worship of the dead,

which surely was due to the idea of a life after death. The megaliths of the later stone age undoubtedly mark the burial places of chiefs and great men, and are beyond question the most important remains of prehistoric civilization in Europe. For their erection they required the systematic co-operation of a great number of men, who felt it a sacred duty to pay this honor to the dead.

The "enlightened" thinkers of the 18th Century tried hard to discover a tribe with no idea of God and no hope of immortality; but their search was in vain, for even the most degraded and savage peoples had at least their fetishes, which they regarded as gods, or in which they believed the souls of their ancestors to dwell. No nation inters its dead as it would an animal; the savage passes at death into the land of his forefathers, into the realm of souls. In this matter religious tradition and the instinct of an existence incapable of annihilation precede the arguments of developed reason, and thus the universal belief in the continuance of our existence is the pyramid erected to religious faith on the graves of all mankind.

Since adherents of the modern empirical and inductive method of research are the most scientific, and at the same time the most energetic, opponents of a belief in immortality, therefore evidence, derived from history and anthropology, is peculiarly opportune and important. The hope of a future life inherent in Aborigines is hence worthy of the same attention, and perhaps more interesting than the ideas of civilized nations. It is necessary to consider this hope more particularly in the case of tribes which were supposed hitherto, or until quite recently, to have been without any idea of a life after death. Evidence of this kind will be of special importance in view of the modern preference for empirical methods of proof.

Although the various forms of the belief in immortality are generally crude and sensual, reflecting the state of intellect from which they proceed, more pleasing characteristics are not wholly wanting. We have to take into account the degree of civilization which a nation has reached, before we can judge its conception of immortality or of God. To demand of a savage a natural religion in all its purity would be to ask of him something almost supernatural, and to demand something which none even of the cultured nations of antiquity attained, in spite

of their advance in intellectual and artistic pursuits. The sensuality of the pagan conception of the future life is not overcome even in the view of immortality held by the highly civilized Greeks. Where the mind is occupied chiefly with sensual things, and the will is concerned predominantly with satisfying the lower needs and cravings of the body, it is obvious that the other world receives a coarse and realistic coloring. Underlying the coarseness there is, however, a germ of truth, and we can discover traces of it under the mass of childish and absurd fancies, with which barbarous tribes express their faith in immortality. Our happy possession of Christian hope does not prevent us from forming a fair and just opinion of lower aspirations and expectations; it enables us rather to examine these things impartially and charitably, and in this way we find much to edify us in the hopes and desires of even a poor savage.

Ethnologists are agreed in placing the Aborigines of Australia in the lowest rank of human beings, and among these the lowest are the natives of Western Australia. Sir John Lubbock's assertion that they have no vestige of faith in God or in another life, has long since been refuted by the observations of dependable and intelligent travellers and missionaries.

Monsignor Salvado, the founder of the Benedictine mission at New Nursia in Swan River Colony, also Oldfield and others, have found such faith among the natives of the West Shore. They believe that a departed soul sits singing and lamenting on a tree, and may be enticed to enter the mouth of a living person. A mother fancies that the soul of her dead child calls to her in the cry of a night-bird, and so she hastens to utter tender words of invitation, urging it to pass into her mouth. Some tribes hold more elaborate views, enriched with an idea of retribution. They think that only the virtuous reach heaven (*Kadidsha*), a place with a delightful climate and of surpassing beauty, where peace and joy prevail, where there is abundance of game, and where evil spirits are powerless. The dead who fail to receive proper burial must for all eternity wander as ghosts on earth. Other tribes imagine the Milky Way to be a reflection of the Darling River, from the banks of which the souls of the blessed catch fish. The tribes living near the Macdonnell range, in Southern Australia, fancy that to two beardless youths has been assigned the duty of diverting the

waters from Laia, the paradise situated in the north. According to the natives in Wellington there are white angels (*Balumbal*), in whom they probably see the souls of the departed, feasting on honey among the mountains of the South-West. The Narrinyeri on the Murray River hope that Norrundere or Martummere, who created men and taught them how to hunt, will cast a rope down to the dying and draw them to himself among the Wyierrewarre stars. The Wailwun believe that the good (*Murruba-murri*) pass into heaven with Baiame, whilst the wicked (*Kugil-murri* = liars) perish altogether. The widespread belief in the transmigration of souls is evidence of the general acceptation of their continued existence, and it is expressed in the curt saying, "If you die black, you will rise white." A native of Port Lincoln, condemned to be hanged at Adelaide, consoled himself with the hope of returning to earth as a white man. Colonists and fugitives from justice, such as the "white Chieftain" Buckley, turned this prevalent belief among the Australian Aborigines to their advantage by asserting that they were the kinsfolk of the blacks, and had come back after having been bleached white in the light of heaven. In Western Australia Europeans and ghosts are designated by the same word: "Djanga." When a whale comes ashore on the South Coast of Australia the natives ascribe their good fortune to the help of departed friends. The soul of the first person whom a man kills becomes a guardian spirit and takes up its abode in the murderer. On the other hand the host of malignant spirits (*Igna, Mani*) is also recruited from the ranks of the dead, whose souls may be seen at night over their graves, ready to supply magicians with baneful drugs. People are careful to avoid mentioning a dead man by name, lest they should summon his spirit to appear.

The natives of Tasmania, now extinct, shared most of the religious customs and beliefs of the Australian tribes who were akin to them in race. There is no doubt that they believed in a life after death, since they hoped for the return of their departed kinsfolk and friends, and relied upon their intervention in the affairs of the survivors. It was their custom when some one fell sick to put him near a corpse, so that the deceased might appear at night and drive out the devil causing the disease. Of one Tasmanian it is reported that he ascribed his

escape from great danger to the protection of his dead father. Facts such as these make it impossible for us not to endorse de Quatrefages' assertion (*Hommes fossiles et hommes sauvages,* p. 347) that the Tasmanians, like other uncivilized races, were neither materialists nor atheists, as had first been believed.

In the case of the Papuans or Melanesians, their ideas regarding God and the future life are of little moral value. Nevertheless they not only believe in another life but even in future retribution, although they make it depend upon physical rather than moral excellence. "At Port Moresby the natives say that the spirit, as soon as it leaves the body, proceeds to Elema, where it for ever dwells in the midst of food and betel-nuts, and spends its days and nights in endless enjoyment,—eating, chewing betel-nuts, and dancing. Most worthless fellows are sent back to Poava and Idia, small islands near Boera, there to remain until the goddess sees fit to send for them" (Chalmers and Gill, *Work and Adventure in New Guinea,* p. 153, 1885 ed.). Many tribes in New Guinea believe in the transmigration of souls. O. Finsch states it as his opinion that the inhabitants of New Britain have no idea of a life after death, yet what he himself tells us regarding their funeral rites and sacrifices disproves his statement. Wilfred Powell discovered in the interior of the country the custom of burying an oar with a corpse, so that the dead man might be able to row across to heaven, which, according to native tradition, is situated where the sky and ocean meet. Only the Duck-Duck, a person who surrounds himself with the air of mystery, knows whether the dead has gone to Boinoman, the good spirit, or to Bo-Boinoman, the evil spirit. In the former case the body may be buried near its former dwelling; in the latter it is hidden somewhere in the bush. The Solomon Islanders suppose that the souls of the departed follow the sun and sink with it into the ocean. The inhabitants of the New Hebrides also believe the West to be the abode of the departed spirits; they say that at the entrance sits one armed with a club, who hits newcomers on the head if they are not on their guard. The good go to Paradise, where they eat delicious fruit and smoke tobacco, but misers and murderers are sent to a place of torment. The natives of New Caledonia have very similar beliefs. They regard Paradise as a place where fish and yams abound, so that

there is plenty to eat and drink; there is much merriment and dancing; the women are perpetually young and beautiful, and both boys and old men become vigorous youths. The wicked, however, go to a place where they have to struggle with huge demons and receive many blows from the lash. The Marist missionary, Father Lambert, derived much information regarding the beliefs of the Belep Islanders from an old pagan priest on Pott Island. He said that the departed souls set forth on the way to Tsiabilum, the land of Doibat. All, good and bad alike, are destined to tarry there. At the farthest point of Pott Island dwells an evil spirit called Kiemua, a sort of Cerberus, who rules the land of Tsiabumbon. He is not a man nor a spirit of man, and his origin is unknown. His throne is a rock, and he continually holds a spear in his hand, and tries to ensnare the souls as they pass by. If once they are entangled in his fatal net, Kiemua inflicts grievous tortures upon them; but when his fury cools down, he lets them continue their journey to Tsiabilum. This is a vast country at the bottom of the sea to the south-east of Pott Island. Its beauty and fertility cannot be described; ignamen, taro, and the sugar-cane ripen there perpetually without the need of a human hand to cultivate them. There are also groves of wild oranges, which the happy inhabitants use to play with. As the number of souls assembled there increases, the land expands, and the Belep Islanders think it will soon extend to their country. Darkness is not allowed to destroy the charm of this abode, and the need of sleep is never felt. Tsiabilum is governed by a king named Doibat, who, like Kiemua, is neither a man nor a human spirit. He does not summon the souls, they are spontaneously drawn to him. All the inhabitants of this favored land enjoy happiness such that none greater can be imagined. The members of a family who arrive first await with joy the coming of those dear to them; parents await their children, children their parents; the husband awaits his wife and the wife her husband, and a well-filled basket, the gandiemawon, is ever at hand to furnish refreshment to newcomers. Dullness, melancholy, discord, sickness, and old age are unknown; the dwellers in that land contemplate and admire one another; they play ball with oranges, and the differences in age can be perceived only from the fruit, since the first arrivals play with dried oranges, the

later comers with ripe fruit, and the most recent with green fruit. The souls are in Tsiabilum only during the night; when day dawns they go back to their friends on earth and occupy the tombs raised in their honor. Each night they return to Tsiabilum, and it is only on their first journey that they need fear Kiemua's net.

To the Melanesians, therefore, the next world is not a place whence there is no return. The inhabitants of Humboldt Bay, on first seeing Europeans, believed them to be their ancestors coming back white from the spirit world. Since they regarded them as divine, they refused to accept food from them, for whoever touches the food of the gods must die. On the Torres Islands and on Erromanga in the New Hebrides one and the same word is used to designate the spirits of the dead and the strangers arriving on ships.

The Papuan belief that we reach the next world in the same condition in which we quit this life has produced in some of the islands a desire to depart hence free from bodily ailments and from the weakness of old age, and consequently the natives seek death, not at their own hands, but at the hands of their kinsfolk. The way to the other world is long, toilsome, and dangerous, so that a man weakened by age would never reach his goal but succumb to the first onslaught of the mighty guardian of Hades. In order, therefore, not to be deprived of immortality, a man who has come to the prime of life tells his friends that he wishes to die. Should he fail to do this, they are bound to take matters into their own hands, and to secure his eternal life by cutting short his earthly existence. A family council is held, the day is fixed for his death, and a grave is prepared. The choice is given him whether he will strangle himself or be buried alive. In Aroma, on the South Coast of New Guinea, old people are treated as if they were already dead. Matina saw a grandson put his grandmother into her grave, regardless of her tears and feeble resistance. "She is as good as dead," he remarked apologetically, and thereupon flung earth into the grave, trampled it down, and quite serenely went home.

Hunt, who went as missionary to the Fiji islanders, describes a similar scene, of which he was an eyewitness. A young man invited him to attend his mother's funeral, and he willingly

accepted the invitation, but noticed with astonishment that there was no corpse in the procession. Turning to the chief mourner he asked for information, and the man pointed to his mother, who was walking beside him, apparently in the best of health and spirits. Hunt expressed his amazement, which increased when the savage went on to explain that they had already eaten the funeral feast in his mother's honor, and were now about to bury her, as she was getting old. He and his brother had decided that she had lived long enough, and she, too, was quite convinced that the time had come for her to die. He added that this was the only reason for his "kind" act, and that no one but himself or his brother was allowed to perform this sacred duty. Hunt did his utmost to prevent the tragedy, but his eloquence had no effect upon this strange form of filial piety. When they reached the grave the mother sat down, and her children, grandchildren, and friends took leave of her. She was then strangled by her sons with a rope made of tapa, and was buried with the customary ceremonies. Williams tells us that an old chieftain on Somo-Somo, one of the Fiji Islands, was buried alive and all his wives were strangled; before this took place, however, the young chieftain bewailed his father as already dead. On these islands this custom was so general before the introduction of Christianity that in one village with several hundred inhabitants Captain Wilkes found only one person above the age of forty; all the other elderly people had been put to death. From the missionaries there he learnt that during their residence on the islands they had only once heard of a natural death. The same custom prevails on the Aru Islands, in the New Hebrides, on Ruk and Kunai and in New Caledonia, where the day of execution is called "the festival of the aged." Friends or relatives always act as executioners. In the case of those attacked by fever, the disease is not allowed to destroy the patient's strength completely; he is put to death just as soon as he has refused nourishment for three days. The "deceased" is then buried by the mourners with many tears and fitting honors.

The Papuan belief in life beyond the grave is further demonstrated by the custom of supplying the dead not only with food, weapons, and implements, but with companions as well. As the needs and desires of this world are thought to be trans-

ferred to the future life, the dead man's friends are careful to provide him with everything that he valued when alive. His favorite weapons and utensils are laid in his grave, so that he may have no difficulty in obtaining food in the next world, and his wives, kinsfolk, and slaves are put to death, that he may not lack company and attendance.

We hear horrible details of this cruel custom as practised on the Fiji Islands. The road along which souls must pass on their way to Mbulu, heaven, is long and perilous, for it is beset with enemies. Woe to the bachelor who traverses it! The "great woman," the goddess Bewalevu, lies in wait for him, for she harbors undying hatred against unmarried men, and tears to pieces every one who dares to set forth on his journey to the other world unaccompanied by wives. And if he is fortunate enough to escape her, he will inevitably be dashed to atoms by Nangga-Nangga, another terrible deity. A wife, however, has nothing to fear on the way, provided that at her death her husband cuts off his beard and puts it under her left arm. In order, then, that a dead man may be able to prove his marriage to the satisfaction of the enemies of the unmarried state, his wives must die with him, and he waits for them to join him at a particular spot, so that they may all continue their journey together. When Katu Mbithi, the pride of Somo-Somo, had perished at sea, all his wives were put to death. According to some authorities they numbered seventy or eighty. After the massacre on Namena, in 1839, eighteen wives were sent to accompany their murdered husbands into eternity. Until recently the Fiji islanders imposed upon a widow's brother the task of strangling his sister with a tapa rope immediately after her husband's death. A woman who refused to die thus would be suspected of infidelity to her marriage vow. At the funeral of King Ulivou his five wives and one daughter were strangled; the chief wife caused some delay, as she was taking leave of her friends, and was rebuked by the new king, her nephew, who himself put the noose round her neck and helped to strangle her; he said that he had done the same service previously to his own mother. As a rule a wife is quite willing to die; in fact she goes to her brother or nearest male relation saying: "I wish to die that I may accompany my husband to the land whither his spirit has gone. Do me the favor to strangle me

quickly, that I may be able to overtake him." Failing one to help her in performing this last duty, she takes her own life. It has happened that a widow, rescued by the missionaries, made her escape at night, and after swimming across an inlet of the sea rejoined her family and demanded death as a sacred right. Whippi was abused and hated by a widow whose life he had saved. So deeply rooted was this barbarous custom that natives of Fiji who had been converted to Christianity secretly rejoiced when a young man fell dead together with their chief, shot by an enemy in ambush. In New Caledonia the old custom has repeatedly triumphed over the strict prohibition issued by the French government. As recently as 1866 two of the wives of Matamoe, the eldest son of a chief named Waton, were killed and buried with him, and the government had to be satisfied with the explanation that the women had committed suicide. Not only widows, but mothers, near relatives, intimate friends, and faithful servants are ready to join the dead in the grave. At Aneityum the mother or an aunt voluntarily dies with a favorite child, and it is said that from her wedding day onward a woman wears round her neck the rope with which she is to be strangled upon her husband's death.

The worship of ancestors is another proof that the Melanesians believe in immortality. All pagan nations regard the other life more or less as a continuation of life in this world, yet they anticipate something more than a mere change of place, and look forward to a higher stage of existence. According to the belief of almost all savages, the dead approach the state of the deity and attain the rank of demigods, or at least of beings standing midway between gods and men. They are venerated as guardian spirits and take a prominent part in directing the destiny of mankind. There is a tendency to assign peculiar honors after death to kings and princes, who when alive were regarded as favorites, or even sons, of the gods, and the worship of the *manes* is an inevitable result of this practice. We may in many cases look upon sacrifices offered at the death and burial of princes and great men as features of this cultus; moreover, the slaughter of prisoners of war is not always due to a desire for vengeance, but is intended to add glory to the spirits of the fallen. In pagan Rome the spirits of the virtuous were invoked as Lares, Penates, and

Genii, and looked upon as the protecting spirits of the family, or as demigods; whereas the souls of the wicked were dreaded as malignant spirits, and were called Larvae or Lemures. Ghosts, bogies, and goblins take their place in more recent days.

To savages the worship of the dead is a most essential part of religion. Theodor Waiz says: "The religion of man in the state of nature is a very crude faith in spirits and ghosts, with no intrinsic connection; it destroys all unprepossession in considering natural phenomena and the human heart is plunged by the rankest superstition from one apprehension into another." To a savage the dead are raised to the position of spirits possessing power to interfere with the ordinary course of events, and thus sharing the prerogatives of the Almighty. Being human souls with human affections, they use their power for the benefit of their brethren in this world; one hand is stretched downward, the other upward; with the one they accept the sacrifices offered on earth, with the other returning for them favors from the gods. A savage feels a slavish fear rather than childlike love of his gods; he pictures them enthroned in inaccessible spheres and hardly dares to raise his eyes to them, and still less to come into direct communication with them. The souls of his friends, however, he regards as intermediaries, to whom he may appeal for help. There can be no doubt that, besides nature worship, the exaggerated honors paid to ancestors and heroes, and the deification of deceased princes and chiefs of families contributed to the growth of polytheism in ancient times. This fact has caused E. B. Tylor, Herbert Spencer and their followers to attempt to revive Euhemerism, and to trace back the origin of all religion to the worship of ancestors, which in its turn, according to their system of evolution, is derived from the same instinct that makes a flock of sheep follow their leader. Euhemeros was a Cyrenaic philosopher, who taught that the gods were originally nothing but remarkable men, whom the veneration of contemporaries and successors had exalted to the rank of deities. For instance, Zeus had been a wise king, who raised an altar to his royal grandfather Uranos. The author of this new theogony was viewed with disfavor by the Greek philosophers. Callimachus calls him "an old swindler, who scribbles infamous books," while the masses of the people were highly resentful

at the attacks made upon their poetical mythology and remained faithful to their belief in the gods. Euhemeros overlooked the fact that the idea of God and a faith in real deities must be presumed for a worship of ancestors. A savage may not often think of the gods, and perhaps he hardly ever mentions them, but his reliance upon the intercession of the dead proves that he has some conception of higher and more powerful beings; he has recourse to his glorified ancestors and looks to them for help, because they are near the gods, dwell with them, and distribute their gifts. The Solomon islanders believe that the souls (*Ataro*) of their forefathers have gone to the god Yona, and received from him the Mana, the supernatural vital force, which is communicated also to the figures in which they take up their abode. This circumstance accounts for the wide-spread custom of building temples to the gods on or near the graves of the dead.

The Papuans of New Guinea crouch before their Korwar (Karwar, Karowar), a wooden image in which the soul of some dead friend is supposed to reside as a protecting spirit. They ask his advice and help, and bring him tobacco, cotton, cloth, and glass beads as offerings. The figure is provided with eyes, and is then spoken to, for the soul of the departed has now come to dwell there. In every native house in the region of Doreh Bay is a figure of this kind, with a large head, a huge mouth, and projecting nose; it plays an important part at births, marriages, and deaths, as well as on excursions for hunting and warfare. While the tribes in the interior of the island have not fetishes of the dead, they dread the departed souls that wander about in the forests, and each family has its sacred place where sacrifice is offered to these spirits. A favorite form of ancestor worship in New Guinea is the cultus of skulls. The Papuans of Doreh dedicate the heads of the dead to the god Korwar, and fit each skull with eyes, ears, and nose. In other parts of Melanesia the skulls of friends and tribesmen, and especially of chieftains, and occasionally also those of enemies, are preserved as fetishes or talismans. We may safely assert that there is not a single tribe of the Papuan race altogether unaccustomed to the worship of ancestors. At Baladea (New Caledonia) the name for God is Dianua, for spirit, Dianu, and for corpse, Diu. Prayers are offered daily before the

Penates, and sacrifices are performed both before and after any important undertaking. On Tanna, one of the New Hebrides, the same word, Aremha, denotes both gods and ancestral spirits. The chief who officiates as priest makes an offering of first fruits and then, in the presence of a silent assembly, prays aloud to the protecting spirit. The Fiji islanders distinguish the original, uncreated gods (*Kalouvu*) from the spirits of ancestors (*Kalou-yalo*), to whom they pray, and by whom they swear.

According to the unanimous testimony of all unprejudiced students, the worship of God has in Polynesia and Mikronesia been replaced by the cultus of Manes to such an extent that it is difficult to obtain any information about the earlier mythology. In addition to the images of gods, there were everywhere so-called Tii or Tiki, crudely cut figures, or rather staffs of wood, at the top of which a head, or sometimes only a face, was carved. These were made in memory of the dead, and were regarded as channels of divine powers. The same as the temples, the burial places, which in Samoa, Tonga, and New Zealand often served as temples, were considered sacred. Kings, chiefs, and priests, who when alive had enjoyed direct intercourse with the deity, were upon entering the realm of night (Po) admitted to the ranks of the gods. Before the souls of departed could enter heaven, atoning sacrifices had to be offered for them. After this the souls were devoured by the gods, and thus, having acquired a share in the divine nature, they obtained admission to the abode of the blessed. They can, however, return to earth in order to drink Kava, and to enter into communication with the living.

The inhabitants of Samoa, which with Tonga is regarded as the original home of the Polynesians, have among Fijians incurred the reproach of atheism, because they have neglected both the higher deities and the worship of idols. Consequently some travellers and explorers have rashly pronounced them to deny the existence of God. But they venerate the souls of their ancestors, and explicitly profess faith in a future life, in a Paradise which is naturally depicted in Mahometan colors. Some of them think that Paradise is situated on their own island, others believe it to be in a distant land, where the chiefs are admitted to Bolotu, the abode of the gods. They say that

the dead appear at night in the form of fiery sparks, and come to visit their former homes, but vanish at daybreak.

It is to be kept in mind that in Polynesia, New Zealand, and Hawaii it was quite common for friends with pitiful heroism to follow those dear to them to death and the grave. Gerland thinks that the custom of infanticide, so prevalent on many South Sea Islands, and especially on Tahiti, is the outcome of religious feelings, the natives hoping to secure for themselves mediators with the gods by releasing the souls of children, who are considered peculiarly sacred. That this desire to have advocates in heaven has often led to infanticide can hardly be denied. On the Marshall Islands souls that have become guardian spirits are called Anis, Anij, Anit, or Alinche; on the Caroline Islands they are invoked as Tahutup or Tau-tup, souls of ancestors, and prayers and sacrifices are offered in their honor. They are supposed to bless the harvest and to grant success to hunters; they are not banished permanently from this world, but return hither on the fourth day after death to receive the homage of their survivors; moreover they can, if they choose, pass into the bodies of animals. A heaven awaits the good, and a hell the evil spirits.

Captain Wilson bears testimony to the Pelew Islanders' faith in the immortality of the soul. He brought one of these islanders to England, and having remarked to him on some occasion that people pray in our churches that they might become better, and live again in heaven after death, this islander answered at once that the same belief existed in Pelew; the wicked remain on earth, but the good go to heaven and become very beautiful. And yet Sir John Lubbock refers to Wilson as supporting his statement that the Pelew Islanders believe neither in God nor in immortality.

In the Indian Archipelago the barbarous custom is again met of slaying the slaves of the deceased. At the funeral of an important Dyak in Borneo, his relatives impressed upon the slaves about to be sacrificed that they must serve their master well in the next world; rub him whenever he felt ill, and always be at hand to wait upon him, because it was for this purpose that they would be killed. No less than forty slaves were put to death at Tomogung Tundan's funeral. When a Rajah of Long Wahou dies a head-hunt is organized, and posts placed

round the grave are adorned with human heads. The people of Iddah believe that whenever they kill a man in this world they provide themselves with a servant for the future life. A. B. Meyer writes that as late as in 1871, a chieftain having died at Manado, he found that his servants were afraid to go out after dark, lest they should be beheaded. The practice of collecting heads is connected with this belief. The acquisition of a human head is supposed to secure in the other life the service of its owner, and therefore the more heads a man collects, the larger will be his retinue when he makes his appearance in the next world. Mourning for the dead ceases as soon as a head has been obtained to ensure his having a servant; a certain father, having lost a child, went out and killed the first person whom he met.

The highly civilized Hindoos were most unwilling to abandon the ancient custom which required a wife to offer herself to be burnt or buried alive upon her husband's death. In 1803, 370 widows went thus to their death within a radius of 30 miles of Calcutta, and, between 1818 and 1823, 3068 were sacrificed in the district of Canton alone. According to ancient ritual, the funeral pyre is kindled by the dead man's son or nearest relative, and then the widow, after walking seven times round it, flings herself into the flames, calling her conscience to witness that she wishes to follow her husband. Her last words are Satya, Satya! — a good wife. Not long ago a highly educated Hindoo wrote a book in English, describing the terrible scene that occurred when his aunt, in her sorrow at her husband's death, became a "Suttee," i.e., voluntarily ascended the blazing pile of wood.

The Mincopies, nomads of very small stature, living on the Andaman Isles, have been assumed to be among the lowest of human kind and to possess no religion whatsoever. Yet they show great affection for the dead, and a widow carries about with her, until she marries again, her deceased husband's skull, painted red and adorned with fringes. Women wear necklaces made of the finger and leg bones of their ancestors, and esteem these as most precious ornaments. The Mincopies without doubt look forward to another life, and they kindle fires under the bier on which the corpse of a chieftain lies, in order that thus the spirit of the mighty dead may be brought to rest.

Let us now turn to the inhabitants of Madagascar, who belong geographically to Africa, but ethnographically to Oceania and Eastern Asia, for anthropologists and ethnologists are almost unanimous in regarding them as closely connected with the Malayo-Polynesians, whom they resemble in appearance, language, and customs. "The notions entertained by the Malagasy with regard to the spiritual part of man and a future state are very uncertain and indefinite; and it is difficult to obtain from them any accurate statement as to their belief in a soul and its condition after death." "Some of the expressions used when speaking of the dead have something like a pantheistic notion involved in them. For instance they speak of their friends as *làsan'ko Andriamànitra,* i.e. gone to be god, as if some idea of absorption into the Divine essence were entertained" (Sibree, *Madagascar*). In a very remarkable speech ascribed to King Andrianimpoinimerina, who died in 1810, he tells his family and friends that God is fetching him away to heaven. The dead are frequently spoken of as *nody mandry,* gone home to sleep, an expression that seems to suggest a return from the grave, since the same word is used of people who spend a night out and go back home on the following day. Faith in spirits exists all over the island. There are various names for them, e.g., *matoatoa, ambiora,* and *lola.* The Betsileo, Tanala, and other tribes in the south believe in the existence of a fearful monster, a sort of living skeleton, to which they give the name *Kinoly.* Another remarkable name for a spirit, in use among the same tribes, is *fahasivin ny maty,* literally "the ninth of the dead," or *fahasivy,* the ninth. The Tanala call the spirits of the living *ambiroa* or *ameroy.* The *fahasivy* are said to appear in dreams, and they must be propitiated by sacrifices.

According to the belief of the Malagasy, the spirits of the dead go to Ambondrombe, a high mountain covered with forests on the eastern edge of the plateau between the districts occupied by the Betsiles and Tanala respectively. The natives do not venture to go near it, and wonderful stories are told of salutes fired there whenever a member of a royal family arrives among the dead.

This account may be supplemented from a report written by Father Finaz, a missionary in Madagascar, who tells us that

divine honors are paid to the princes of the Sakalava immediately after their death, and religious ceremonies are performed when a new sovereign ascends the throne. Children often offer sacrifices to the souls of their parents. A king "who has turned his back" is considered sacred by the Hova; all his treasures are buried with him and sacrifices are offered. The departed are frequently invoked by surviving relatives.

The ideas of the African tribes on the subject of the future life have been fully discussed by us in a separate work (Schneider, *Die Religion der Afrikanischen Naturvölker,* 1891), so we may pass on to the pagans of the Western hemisphere, who are also found to believe in the immortality of the soul.

The Eskimos or Innuits, who inhabit the Far North, are undoubtedly akin to the Greenlanders. Sir John Lubbock cites them as a remarkable instance of people who have attained to a really high morality without the aid of any religion. A moral nation possessing no conception of God and no hope of immortality would no doubt be a great find for the upholders of "independent morality," but the Eskimos are, or have been, neither particularly moral, nor quite devoid of religion. Very valuable information as to their faith in a higher Being and in another life is given us by David Cranz. He found that some Greenlanders might be considered to be materialists in the modern sense, but the more intelligent among them looked upon the soul as something wholly unlike the body, and continuing to live after death. Most Greenlanders believe Paradise to be situated in the lower world, where the god Torngarsuk dwells. There are found perpetual sunshine, good water, and an abundance of birds, fish, seals, and reindeer, and all game can be caught without any difficulty. But only those who have labored or suffered much, e.g., those drowned in the sea, those who have died at birth, etc., are admitted to this Elysium, and then not without a preliminary purification. They must slide down a rough rock, which hence is stained with blood, and this punishment continues for five days or longer, during which time the survivors abstain from certain kinds of food and from all noisy occupations, in order that the soul may be helped to accomplish its perilous journey. When an adult dies, his tools and weapons are buried with him, that he may provide himself with food in the next world; and a dog's head is laid in a child's

grave, that the dog's soul may serve him as a trustworthy guide. Some think that the souls of the blessed inhabit the highest heaven, far above the rainbow, and their journey thither is so easy and rapid that a soul reaches the moon on the evening of the very day on which death occurred, and plays there with other fresh arrivals. On the other hand, those who think Paradise to be underground, maintain that souls can find no rest in the sky, owing to its rapid rotation, and that consequently they would grow thin and weak there. The wise, however, regard the sojourn in a heaven where there are needs, pleasures, and occupations as merely an intermediate state, preceding admittance to the "silent dwellings." Hell, the place of darkness, cold, pain, and terror, is in the lower world. Among the Greenlanders, as also among the Aleutes, there is a widespread belief in the existence of two souls, — one the breath, the other the shadow. They fancy that the shadow soul hovers for three days round the corpse, and then goes down to the underworld.

According to Eskimo belief there are in the home of the dead two departments; one is reserved for the wicked, and is under the rule of the goddess Sedna, whilst the good go to Kudlivun. There are five stages of purification, and consequently five distinct regions in heaven. In the highest are the perfectly pure souls, the children of light (*Lham-chua*); in the lowest, situated in the sun, moon, and northern lights, are the least pure souls, the children of the stars (*Mittat*). Everyone who has led an honest and religious life may rise to the rank of *Lhamchua*. The Aleutes believe that every man is born and dies five times, and when he departs from life for the fifth time, he quits earth for ever and is placed among the *Mittat*.

The tribes of Northern Asia, the Chukchis, Koriaks, and Kamchadales refuse to consider death to be the end of all things. When a corpse is burnt, which takes place only if the deceased so wished it, the Chukchis watch the direction in which the smoke is carried. If it rises straight into the air, this is a sign that the soul is on its way to the sun. If the smoke refuses to rise, the soul must, in punishment for ill treatment of animals, undertake a migration through bodies of animals. Among both the Chukchis and the Kamchadales old and feeble persons usually ask their relatives to deal them the death-blow.

The North American Indians seem all to believe in a future

life. Impartial authorities, such as Lafitau, Schoolcraft, and Catlin, say that nowhere in North America have they met an Indian, far less an Indian tribe, willing to admit that death involved a total destruction of life. Even under a red skin there is a heart full of desires and hopes, the fulfilment of which is confidently anticipated in another world, where the souls will live for ever.

Among the Algonquin and Iroquois tribes there is a belief in the pre-existence of the soul, and the expression "come up" is equivalent to "be born." The soul is a more or less incorporeal being, to such an extent independent of the body as to be able to quit it at will; the Dakota tribes, however, think that the fate of the soul depends on its exit. If death results from hanging or strangulation, the Cheyennes believe the soul to remain confined within the corpse, and they would much rather suffer untold tortures than die by strangulation. The double-soul theory that we have met with in the extreme North occurs also here. An Ojibway justified this belief in the following way: "In our dreams we wander through vast regions, and see hills, lakes, etc. But at the same time a soul remains in the body; otherwise it would be dead." The Hurons call the skeletons of people long dead Eskenn or Hatiskenn, i.e., souls, manes, shades; for the reason that, while one soul departs from the body at death, lingering near the place of burial until the funeral ceremonies are over, when it is changed into a turtle-dove, or is even transferred directly to the realm of spirits, the second soul remains in the grave with the body, until it finds an opportunity of again inhabiting a human body. Evidence for this belief is seen in the physical likeness between new-born infants and persons long since dead. As a rule, however, those only who died as children are allowed to live again on earth, because their first life was cut short. A child born with two teeth, or immediately after a death, is regarded by the Tinneh as the actual re-apparition of a dead person. Petitot tried in vain to convince a young girl that she had not already lived on earth under another name. The adherents of a French school of spiritists, founded by Allan Kardec, suffer of the same peculiar illusion. The Tlinkit Indians on the North-West Coast think that all human beings undergo reincarnation, and consequently those who are discontented with their lot in life often

express the desire to be killed, in order to be born again under more favorable circumstances, possibly in a chieftain's family. Similar ideas have more than once caused an epidemic of suicide among negroes. The Iroquois leave a small opening in every grave, so that the soul may pass in and out unhindered. According to the Tlinkit theory, a soul is free to return from the nether world until the body has been burnt.

Graves are sacred, and their desecration is considered an offence punishable with death. Some Indian tribes have common burial places, to which are brought subsequently the bodies of those buried temporarily in hunting-grounds. This second burial takes place with much ceremony and renewed lamentations. Both the Iroquois and Hurons celebrated it every ten or twelve years, and also whenever they moved their camps. With anxious care each family collected the smallest particles of bones that had been part of their friends, and honored them with songs of mourning and offerings. For a few days before they were committed to the common grave the bodies and fragments of bone were exhibited to view.

All Indian tribes place the realm of the dead in a distant land, but they do not agree as to the direction in which it is situated. The way to it is long, toilsome, and perilous, and souls that have been denied the last honors have great difficulty in finding it. They have to climb steep mountains, or cross deep abysses on the slippery back of a huge serpent, or traverse broad, rushing streams in a boat made of stone, or by means of a narrow, unsteady bridge. Whoever falls into the stream is changed into a fish or a turtle. Many children are afraid to attempt the dangerous crossing, and once a woman of the Menomoni tribe, herself a mother, took pity upon two children; one she held by the hand, another she wrapped in her cloak, and so advanced to the tree trunk that formed the bridge. It swayed so much that she could not hold the little ones; they fell into the water, where they were immediately changed into turtles. Fortunate is the Tlinkit Indian who possesses friends in the world of shadows. At his call they come and bring their canoes to carry him safely across the river, whilst many unhappy spirits wander up and down on the bank, seeking in vain some means of transit. Though a man may succeed in reaching the farther shore, he is not yet secure, for he finds to his horror more than one

Cerberus to threaten him. Having escaped this danger, he meets his relations and friends in a charming clearing of the forest, on the border of the promised land. They crowd round him, eager for news of happenings on earth, but the welcome he receives is not always hearty. Because of the long journey awaiting the dead, food and his favorite possessions are put either in or upon his grave. To a full-grown man are given his battle-axe, his tobacco pipe, his bow and quiver, his medicine pouch, and the scalps he has won. A child is given his playthings. According to a tradition among the Tlinkit, the souls of the dead cannot eat food which has not previously been transformed by fire, and, on the other hand, dwellers on earth cannot enjoy the nourishment acceptable to spirits. The Menomoni woman, mentioned above, received, on her visit to the other world, from her mother venison, bear meat, and berries, but later on she discovered that instead of venison she was carrying shavings of wood, and coals in place of berries.

As the Israelite, when about to die, hopes to be gathered to his forefathers in Sheol, the Indians speak of going to visit their grandfather. But among the cultured nations of antiquity Hades was supposed to be a place of gloom, and the Indians, too, picture the realm of souls as a place with sad features. A Tlinkit, who professed to have come back from the land of departed spirits, described life there as far from enjoyable; hunger, thirst, and poverty are found there also; the water of the river in the underworld is green and bitter, unfit for drinking, and the souls receive food and drink in proportion only to the offerings burnt in fires by their survivors. Those whose corpses have been cremated enjoy light and warmth, because they can always approach the fire, but the others suffer cold and darkness. Souls to whom slaves have been sacrificed lead an easy existence, but all others must work.

Nevertheless, the Indian's general conception of the next world is that of a better world, rich in possessions and amusements, such as an Indian would crave; in short, it is a Paradise, comparable to the Garden of Eden in the splendor, variety, and abundance of natural products. The Iroquois and Hurons call it "Eskennenna," the land of souls or of forefathers; others speak of it as "Wakanda," the land of life, and many tribes give it the name of Happy Hunting-grounds. Here dwells the

Great Spirit, and under a cloudless sky perpetual spring, inviolable peace and boundless joy prevail. The blessed can hunt, fish, smoke, jest, play, and dance to their hearts' content. The prospect of such an Elysium makes many Indians look upon death as a boon, for which self-sought death is not too high a price to pay. Among the northern tribes in particular those growing old ask their children to kill them, as a deed of love. Among the Ojibways of the north a father requests his son to give him a "change of climate"; if he fails to make this request the old man is forced to choose whether he will be carried in a little canoe to the shore of an island, there to be left to die alone, or to be put to death according to ancestral custom. As a rule the latter is chosen, and then the members of his family unite in singing a joyful song of thanksgiving, praising the Lord of life for having taught them how to proceed that the old and feeble may be transposed to a better land, where they will enjoy renewed youth and be able to hunt. After this song the sacred pipe is lighted and the great "medicine song" chanted. The eldest son possesses the melancholy privilege of dealing his father the death-blow with a club.

Among the Indians in Labrador, near Hudson's Bay, also it is usual for parents, when they grow old, to seek death at the hands of their children, who consider themselves bound to comply with such request. A grave is prepared and the candidate for death takes his place in it; and then, after a last draught of wine, he gives a signal, whereupon two of his children strangle him.

The departed are believed to arrive in the happy hunting-ground with the equipment supplied them at death; consequently the survivors consider it a labor of love to paint and adorn the bodies before burial, that they may make a good impression in the land of spirits. Among the Cheyennes and other tribes in the Far West an old uniform of the United States army is much in favor for the adornment of the corpse of a brave. Some Indian tribes practise the cruel custom of killing friends and slaves in order that the beloved dead may not lack companions and attendants in the next world. An old chief of the Tsimsheans caused a female slave to be killed, so that his dying daughter might find someone ready to wait upon her in the other life. The Osages, Comanches, and others

fancy that the acquisition of a scalp will give them control over the soul of the one scalped, and therefore the best service they can render to a fallen warrior is to provide him with a slave in the next world by hanging up an enemy's scalp over his grave. Women of the Knistenaux tribe often die voluntarily with their husbands, and on one occasion a number of slaves were burnt over the body of a Sitka chief, "that they might serve him in the other world."

A boy of fourteen of the Sioux tribe died, and his parents were in deep distress. His father died shortly after, partly of grief and partly through the loss of blood, which he suffered as a result of wounds self-inflicted in accordance with the custom of his people. Thereupon the mother, who had previously been inconsolable, suddenly ceased to mourn, and, being questioned as to the reason for her change of mood, she replied that she was now quite easy in mind about the boy. She had feared that, owing to his youth, he might not be able to find his way in the land of the blessed, but the death of her husband had removed this fear — he had been an affectionate father and was now certain to take care of the child. Her only wish for herself was to rejoin them as soon as might be. When a chief of the Natchez died his wives were strangled, as well as certain faithful followers, who already in his lifetime had been appointed to die with him. Even women who enjoyed the dignity of chief, or who descended from a noble caste, were given companions on their way to the other world.

Chateaubriand (*Voyage en Amérique,* Bruxelles, 1844) records that on the occasion of a chieftainess' death there were strangled her husband and ten children, whose bodies were carried by their parents in solemn procession to the grave, where fourteen other youths, belonging to her body-guard, were slain. Sometimes the number of such victims exceeded a hundred, some of whom had for years previous to the occasion begged permission to escort the soul at death. Also in Florida personal attendants and favorite slaves were compelled to die with their Parausti or chiefs. Baegert, to whom Sir John Lubbock refers, says that the Indians in California had no religion at all, but his own statements show that this was not the case. They believed in continued existence and reunion in the other world. A boy who was mourning over the assassination of his

foster-father had his head smashed by one of the murderers, who bade him go and be the companion and servant in the next world of the man whose murder he bewailed. Another missionary, Bonani, testified that before the Californians had heard of the gospel they already believed that the soul was immortal, though they were in the darkness of paganism. They also knew about heaven, hell, and a higher Being, who ruled all things. Being an indolent race, they did not place the abode of the blessed in happy hunting-grounds, but in a Paradise analogous to their perfect climate, in an eternal state of *dolce far niente*.

While many Indian tribes do not conceive the other world as definitely divided into a place of happiness and a place of woe, they do believe that there is a difference in the state of the dead. Souls whose bodies were deprived of last honors, as also the souls of weaklings and cowards, are not equal to the difficult task of crossing the steep mountains and rocky peaks, the abysses, lakes, and streams of the nether world, and are therefore excluded from the happy hunting-grounds. Moreover, in many localities the ruler of the dead is held to be a malevolent being; this is the case with Atantsique, the grandmother of Tharonhiavagon, the great Spirit of the Iroquois and Hurons; with Kupai, the god of death venerated by the Appalachian tribes, and with Wak or Tuperan, the ruler of the infernal regions according to Californian belief. A person not made invulnerable by the "medicine" of the good god is subject to the authority of the evil spirit. A man's fate hence depends upon a condition beyond human control, and thus it is not a reward or punishment for good or bad behavior, but a predestined doom, of which the dying man is fully aware. According to the Cheyennes, no one who has been scalped can enter Paradise; this belief accounts, on the one hand, for their intense eagerness to scalp enemies, and, on the other, for their heroic efforts to save friends from such a fate. The body of one who has been scalped is not even considered worthy of burial, since the soul that inhabited it is hopelessly lost.

Where the future life is supposed to involve union with the great Spirit, the god of heaven, there seems to be some idea of retribution or reward for earthly conduct. Chiefs and brave warriors are always numbered among the elect. Many tribes place their Valhalla in the southern sky, and they see in

the Milky Way the road that leads there. The heroes of the Appalachians have their home in the sun, as do the chiefs of the Natchez, whilst the souls of their subjects pass into the bodies of animals. The idea of retribution in the future life is pushed into the background by the transference to the next world of social distinctions and bodily and mental qualities that differentiate men here below, but it is false to assert, as is sometimes done, that among the American Indians all thought of future reward and punishment is lacking to their belief in immortality. The Ojibways certainly dread the judgment after death. They think that the dead are carried in a stone boat over a great lake in which the Island of the Blest is situated, and here they must give an account of their actions; the good are allowed to reach the island, but the stone boat capsizes with the wicked, who are then left to stand in the water up to their necks, struggling in vain to reach the blessed island. The Choctaws believe that the sinful soul falls into a river full of dead fish and reptiles, where it will never see the sun, but is tormented in every imaginable way. The Blackfeet say that the departed souls have to climb a steep mountain, from the top of which they look down over a vast plain, abounding in game of every kind. Here and there stand beautiful new tents. Whilst the souls survey this fair country they are discovered by its inhabitants, who come to them wearing garments of fresh skins, and welcome all who have led a good life on earth. The wicked, however, whose hands are stained with the blood of their fellow countrymen, are rejected, and thrown down from the mountain. Women guilty of infanticide never reach the height at all, but are bound to haunt the place where they committed their crime. The views of the Iroquois are revealed in the following occurrence. A melancholy maiden ate some poison weed and was resolved to take no antidote. Although on the point of death she would not listen to the prayers of her sister, who, weeping bitterly, asked her if she really desired that they should never meet again. A missionary happened to come up and asked why she despaired of seeing her sister again, since according to her belief, all souls will be joined by their relatives and friends in the next world. The sister replied: "It is true that we shall all enter the kingdom of souls; but the wicked, and especially those who have killed themselves, bring their crimes with them as a

punishment. They are shut off from others and have no intercourse with them; this is the reason of my lament."

The natives of Mexico, Central America, and the West Indies have opinions regarding immortality that resemble in many respects those of the North American Indians.

So many different nations have inhabited Mexico at different times that the beliefs now current are a curious mixture of exalted and crude ideas. Distinctions of rank and wealth in this world are reflected in the other life. The Tlaxcalas, who formed part of the Aborigines of Mexico, thought that the souls of princes are transformed into clouds, gorgeous birds, or precious stones; and those of ordinary people into rats, beetles, or vermin. Warriors who fall in battle and merchants who die on their journeys are admitted to the Eastern sun-house, i.e., the Eastern heaven, whence with music, clash of arms, frolic, and dances they accompany the sun to the place where it sets, and then carry it through the nether world back to the East. Every four years these souls are transformed, some into clouds and others into humming-birds, and these can return to earth to sing and to suck sap out of flowers. Children sacrificed to Tlalok, the one-eyed god of rain and fertility, pass into his cloud-paradise, where they meet, in a state of blissful idleness, the souls of those who have been struck by lightning or drowned, as well as the souls of persons who died of dropsy or leprosy. All other souls pass to the region of the dead (Miktlan), but their journey thither is long and dangerous, and for this reason the corpse of a man is provided with various safety guards; a priest sprinkles his head with water and lays on his body a number of strips of paper, which are to serve as passports at perilous places. Then the dead person receives the implement indicating his calling; to a warrior is given a battle-axe, to a farmer his hoe, to a woman a spindle and a broom, also a cloak to protect her against the piercing wind. Finally a dog of reddish hair is killed and laid near the corpse, to act as his guide through the nine rivers. People of lower rank were buried, but the bodies of kings and princes were burnt with great solemnity, accompanied by bloody cruelties. When the flames began to consume a ruler's body and the treasures laid beside it, the women and slaves destined to form his escort were led forward and earnestly exhorted by a kinsman of the de-

ceased to serve their master as zealously in the next world as they had done hitherto. Then they were one after another slaughtered upon a stone altar. At the cremation of Nezahualpillo, the last king of Tezkuko, 100 women and 200 slaves were killed, and on the fifth day a supplementary offering of 20 slaves was made. Nowhere, perhaps, has so much human blood been shed in honor of the War God and the Manes of fallen warriors as among the fierce Aztecs, whose priests wore a vestment made of human skin. The civilization that they inherited from the Toltecs did not move them to lay aside the cruel customs which they had brought with them from their northern settlements, and which had existed also among the primitive inhabitants of Mexico. The horrible practice of providing the dead with an escort of attendant souls prevailed also in Central America, in the province of Vera Paz, in Costa Rica, and on Haiti, where the favorite wives of a dead cazique were obliged to follow him to the grave, unless they wished to expose their love and fidelity to the worst suspicions. In the same countries it is usual for men to open their veins or to scourge themselves over a grave, and among some tribes a widow lies for some time beside her dead husband, either in the grave or on the pyre. These customs are the outcome of mistaken ideas of life after death.

In South America similar conceptions prevail regarding the other life. The Caribs, notorious cannibals, believed that souls could not enter the kingdom of the dead until every particle of flesh had been removed from the bones. The souls of the brave revelled in all the joys of the Happy Island; those of cowards and of fallen enemies had to be their slaves, or else wander about as ghosts or goblins, doing much mischief. Where sun-worship existed the souls of the just were supposed to gain admission to the Sun-house, or were changed into stars, whilst those of the wicked passed into the bodies of animals. Human sacrifices were common among the Caribs.

The Tamanaks on the Upper Orinoco have a tradition that death came into the world through a woman's unbelief. The Great Spirit, having for a length of time associated with mankind, said, on taking leave, "In the meantime you will change your skin." These words are interpreted by the Tamanaks as a promise of immortality for the body, but one old woman re-

fused to believe them, and so the Great Spirit exclaimed, "You shall die." Faith in the resurrection was so firm among the Arecunas in British Guiana that in 1846, at the instigation of the cunning and tyrannical sorcerer Awakaipu, four hundred people slew one another in the hope of returning as white men to their families at the next full moon, that thenceforth they might live like Europeans and rule over the Redskins. Strangely enough, about eight years before, a Brazilian, named João Pereira, wishing to found a new kingdom, deceived the credulous natives by means of similar promises, and inspired them with such a passion for violent death that men voluntarily offered him their own children to be killed.

Remarkable echoes of the revealed truth that sin brought death into the world were found among the primitive population of Brazil.

The Guarani retained a tradition that their god and ancestor Tamoi, "the Ancient from Heaven," who instructed their forefathers in the art of agriculture, had departed with the promise some day to lead them to another life, where they would meet their brethren and find game in abundance. Not all Brazilian tribes possess the idea of retribution as clearly as the Chirigua, of whom Saëns says, "They believe that their good deeds will be rewarded by a higher Being, who created all things, and that their bad actions will be punished." The Messayas speak of two spheres; the upper is luminous, the lower, dark. In the former dwells the Godhead; in the latter human beings are born and die, and after death they are rewarded or punished.

As a rule, however, missionaries and explorers give less favorable reports of the religious ideas entertained by the natives of Brazil, the Pampas tribes, and other South American natives. Jean de Léry says that he cannot imagine any nation on the face of the earth to possess less religion, yet he goes on to remark: "In order however to show how much light I have discovered under the densest darkness, I must acknowledge that they not only believe in the immortality of the soul, but are convinced that the souls of the virtuous — virtue being defined in a way peculiar to themselves, as it includes taking vengeance upon and eating their enemies — fly behind the highest mountains and there meet the souls of their fathers and forefathers

and dwell in delightful gardens in a state of perpetual happiness. The souls of the indolent, however, who took no part in the defence of their country, but lived in inglorious ease, pass into the possession of Aynan, the spirit of evil, and must live with him in incessant torments." The wicked spirit of the Botocudos is probably identical with the Aygnan or Anhauda of the Tupinambaras. He is supposed to dig up the dead, if he finds no fire on their graves, and consequently, in order to drive him away, a fire is kept for a time burning on each side of a grave. Like the Aborigines of Canada and Chile, the Caribs, Hottentots, and other tribes, the Botocudos bury the dead in a sitting posture, to signify that they are awaiting rebirth to a new life. The Kamakans or Mungoyos, as they call themselves, deify the dead, and believe them to take part in the government of the world. They fear that any who were ill-treated in this life may return as goblins to avenge themselves upon their persecutors, and in order to appease them, food, cooking utensils, and weapons are laid with them in the grave. So much reliance is placed in departed friends and relatives that it is usual to invoke their help in time of danger.

Whether the abode of the blessed is conceived as a distinct part in the realm of the dead, or as an entirely different region, it is invariably supposed to be a place of enjoyment corresponding to the sensual tastes of man in a state of nature, but the road leading to this Paradise is usually represented as rough and perilous. The Araucanians in Chile used to dread the great rivers in the nether world, across which the souls were conveyed by an old woman in the guise of a whale; another old woman demands toll, and whoever is unwilling or unable to pay it is deprived of an eye. There is fighting in the other world, and a thunderstorm betokens a battle of the spirits, the noise of the thunder being caused by the horses' hoofs and the drums, and the lightning by the firing of rifles. If the storm blows over in the direction of the Spanish settlements, the spirits of the Araucanians are believed to have triumphed over the enemy. Prisoners taken in warfare were sacrificed to the Manes of the slain heroes, and chiefs were privileged to suck a few drops of blood from the hearts of these luckless victims.

The inhabitants of Peru before the time of the Incas treated their prisoners of war still more inhumanly, and even during

the rule of the Incas much human blood was poured out on the graves of the dead. The favorite wives and servants of a deceased ruler would willingly allow themselves to be buried alive with him, since they desired above all things to serve him in the future life. Prescott learnt from some ancient source that more than a thousand human beings were sacrificed when the Inca chief Hayna died. Women of high rank suffered the same fate, and submitted to it willingly, since any refusal on their part would have been regarded as faithlessness. Subsequently it was considered sufficient to lay wooden figures of men and women in the grave, representing companions for the dead. All the tribes of the Amazon believe in life after death, several also in a transmigration of souls.

Don Felix of Azara, from whom Sir John Lubbock derived much information, proceeded to draw up a list of the South American tribes who, he asserted, denied the existence of God and immortality, but he did it in such a fashion that he often contradicted his own claim. The list includes the Abipones in Paraguay, but Martin Dobrizhofer, a missionary who worked among them for seven years, bears witness to their faith in a higher Being and a future life. They treat the remains of their friends with deep respect, bury them with solemn rites, and subject themselves to much exertion in token of mourning. They are very careful to lay their relatives to rest in a common burial place, marked by signs cut on the trees. If some one of theirs dies on the hunt or at war, they do not consign him to a lone grave in strange soil, but carry the body back home, sometimes for a distance of many miles. They regard it as a gross insult to utter a dead man's name, and it frequently happens that, after a death, the whole family adopts another name. As a rule this is due to the fear of ghosts. The Abipones ascribe to their sorcerers the power to call up the souls of the dead and to learn the future from them. After their death, these sorcerers are revered as demi-gods, and their bones are carried as relics on hunting and warlike expeditions. A species of small ducks (Ruilili) that fly about at night uttering mournful cries are regarded as embodied souls of ancestors, and are called Mehelenkachie, *i.e.*, ghosts, or spirits. As the soul does not lose its earthly needs and cravings at death, abundant offerings are made to these birds. The Guaycurus, like other tribes we

have mentioned, used to sacrifice human beings at the burials of great men, and there were always voluntary victims, whose number varied according to the rank of the deceased.

The Patagonians or Tehuelche believed that the souls of the dead dwelt in underground tents, where they feasted on delicacies, but the souls of magicians associated with malignant spirits, who inhabited certain forests, rivers, and peculiarly shaped rocks. Chiefs and the favorites of the gods went to the stars, and the Milky Way is the path that they follow when hunting ostriches.

Travellers have described the inhabitants of the country near the Straits of Magellan as the scum of the human race. Darwin and Morton speak of them as Fuegians, inhabitants of Fireland. Explorers, both ancient and modern, seem to vie with one another in representing these Eskimo of the South as distinct from the rest of humanity, and as approximating closely to the brute creation. Wallis pronounces the Fuegians to be the lowest and most pitiable of all human beings; Cook calls them the refuse of human nature, and Darwin writes, "Viewing such men, one can hardly make oneself believe that they are fellow-creatures, and inhabitants of the same world" (*A Naturalist's Voyage Round the World,* p. 225, 1890). Others go so far as to assert that in their mode of life the Fuegians are not above beavers and orang-outangs. These accounts show that these savages, with their grotesque headgear, their hideously painted faces, their vile food, and their guttural talk, made a most unfavorable impression on all travellers; but they are not really so much like animals, and only an uncritical ethnologist could brand them as devoid of all religion. Friedrich Ratzel has recently pointed out that the Fuegians, in spite of their indigence, are no less scrupulous than more wealthy tribes in observing their funeral rites, which bear a striking resemblance to those in use in other parts of America. The corpse is placed in a squatting position, and is wrapped up like a mummy, so that a man is often better clothed when dead than he ever was when alive. The Fuegians believe that departed souls live in the forests, and whenever a bird cries or a glacier cracks, they ascribe the sound to some spirit. We do not yet possess enough information to enable us to say just how far their thought is occupied with ideas of the future life.

Thus the two tribes, that dispute with one another the melancholy reputation of being the most degraded members of the human race, have introduced and ended our survey of the ideas of immortality current among uncivilized nations. We have seen that even the lowest savage harbors some hope of a better life, and this is one of the most consoling facts revealed by anthropology.

It is, of course, true that isolated and consequently neglected tribes have such poor expectations and ideas of the next life, that, even if their hopes were fulfilled, they could not realize Rousseau's ideal of a true and primitive state of nature. But have we any right to despise their hopes and aspirations because of the crude form in which they are expressed? Certainly not, for in the accord even of these simple, childish and grotesque conceptions, and through the response which the idea of reunion calls forth in every soul, we catch what William Alger terms the "cockcrow heralding the dawn of reason." No doubt the religious growths discussed in this chapter are low of form and putrid of smell, but they are nevertheless genuine and strong growths. The so-called savage looks upon this life as a question to which only a future life can supply an answer; he, too, deems it a mistake to represent existence as ending at death; he, too, is irresistibly impelled to look beyond this world, and his conscience, impressed by the suffering of the innocent and the triumph of injustice on earth, requires, or at least senses, that justice will be done and wrongs righted on a day of judgment.

The confusion and horror in the ideas of the future life entertained by pagans must inevitably fill a Christian with compassion, and at the same time with joy at his own possession of the true and worthy conception of the other life. From the pagan ideas a Materialist would necessarily be led to the conclusion of Jean Paul when, beside the grave of Herder, he cried out to those who denied immortality: "If there be no immortality, if all life is but the gloaming before night, and not the twilight before daybreak, if the lofty spirit is cast with the body into the grave, — then I know not why, when we stand by the graves of our great men, we do not follow the example of ancient and barbarous nations, though we would be moved by despair where they are moved by hope; that, namely, we do

not cast ourselves into the graves of our great, as they threw themselves into the tomb with their chieftains, and why we do not thus seek to still the unreasoning and violent seeking of our hearts for something divine, something eternal, for which to beat!"

Positivist science boasts of its empiricism, but it cannot exclude the undeniable craving for immortality which is so deeply rooted in every soul, the consciousness and desire of a future life, which is supported by testimony as real as anything perceived by the senses. These fundamental facts in our interior experience must be accounted for, and, at the same time, they justify us in drawing our conclusions. If our craving for immortality proceeds from self-deception, it is impossible to assign a reason for the steadfastness with which this belief persists despite all attacks, unlike other delusions. Hence it is implanted in the nature of the human mind, which perceives in itself the vocation to eternal life and the strength to attain it. This argument, on the strength of the testimony of mankind, is strictly in accordance with the principles of Positivist logic.

CHAPTER IV

ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE TESTIMONY OF MANKIND

UNBELIEVERS may scorn arguments for immortality founded on reason. With their respect for manifestations of instinct and for facts learnt by experience, however, they cannot, without glaring inconsistency, disregard the unanimous testimony of the human race, for it is the utterance of sane human nature, making itself heard with the force of a natural necessity. From Pliny's time onward the most obstinate opponents of immortality have been found in the ranks of students of natural history. Pliny, who fancied that even elephants had some idea of religion, writes ironically: "Only men in their vanity imagine, when they come to die, that another life awaits them, and they assume the immortality of the soul, or some transformation, or another life in the nether world, as if the life of man differed at all from that of a beast. Where are the souls that departed all these many centuries? All these are childish fictions proceeding from mortality that hankers after endless existence. Is it not sheer madness to believe that we shall live again after death has claimed us?"

At that rate most men, and the wisest men, must have been insane.

Modern opponents have employed various arguments in their earnest endeavor to destroy the impression made by the unanimous testimony of mankind, although modern preference for historical evidence should make this testimony the more acceptable.

They disparage the consensus of mankind regarding faith in immortality, because it varies in form and is not equally expressed by the different nations. The important point, however, is that the *idea* of immortality is so universal that no age and no race of men have ever been devoid of it. It is an undeni-

able fact that men prefer to face even a continuance in the other world of all the hardships of this life, rather than accept the prospect of total annihilation, and this is the strongest possible evidence of their desire for immortality, since they want it at any cost.

In considering the views of the other life held by pagans, and especially by savage peoples, we must expect them to contain some admixture of what is earthly and sensual. Like their debased form of knowledge of God, their hopes for the future are crude and nebulous, if not mistaken and unworthy, such, in fact, as might be expected of the undeveloped mental and spiritual life of men in a state of nature. But we must not overlook the fact that the anticipation of immortality entertained by a perverted mind and the craving for happiness felt by a corrupt heart are frequently far baser than the spontaneous thoughts and feelings of savages. Even refined nations have conceived the delights of the other world in so sensual a manner that many a race lower in the rank of civilization has more lofty ideas than a man such as Lucian. The savage enjoys the further advantage that with his imperfect education he is far more capable of being purified by Christianity than is the sophistical pagan. Even among Christians there may be those who would fain carry with them into eternity their earthly rank, possessions, and pastimes.

Against the universal prevalence of a belief in immortality it is urged that such a belief is apparently rejected by some four hundred million Buddhists. Many scholars assert, however, that Buddhism does not deny the continued existence of the individual after death, and think it improbable that millions of human beings have fallen victims to absolute pessimism and nihilism. They point out that the doctrine of reincarnation involves and even necessitates belief in immortality, and that without such belief the self-renunciation practised by Buddha and his followers has no meaning. Consequently after referring to reliable authorities on the subject of Buddhism, Froschhammer ventures to say, "Nirvana is for Buddhists a divine sphere of peace and happiness in contrast with the wild restlessness prevailing on earth; it is a region or state of freedom from suffering, an abode of peace, in contrast with the pains and misery of this life." All the best authorities agree in say-

ing that Nirvana originally signified extinction, passing away. The root *va* means to blow, and *nir* as a prefix to verbs gives an idea of separation or destruction, hence Nirvana means the blowing away or apart. This interpretation is not incompatible with the doctrine of reincarnation, which, being a process of atonement or purification, must precede the soul's entrance into the condition of non-existence. We ought, however, to notice that, as Buddhism developed, the word Nirvana lost its original meaning of perfect rest in death, and acquired a more sensuous connotation. To the majority of Buddhists Nirvana is not unlike the Mahometan paradise, and consequently we cannot say that they have no idea of immortality.

Irreligious critics of the Bible have maintained that under the old dispensation the Jews had no hope of immortality. They seemed to overlook the fact that in the earlier books of the Old Testament death is not regarded as the annihilation of personal existence, but as the gathering of a man to his forefathers in Sheol. That this phrase expresses faith in the soul's continued life is plain from the fact that it was not used to describe the physiological dissolution or the interment. The Psalmist commemorates the rest enjoyed by the just in death, which certainly is a reference not to the moment of death, but to continued life after death; he looks forward to the conquest of the power of death and to the release of the just from Sheol, and he alludes to retribution and happiness beyond the grave (Ps. xv. 9, etc.; xvi. 15; xlviii. 15, 16; lxxii. 24, etc.). The later prophets proclaim the resurrection of the dead (Is. xxv. 8, etc.; xxvi. 19; Daniel xii. 1–3); and in Ecclesiastes we read that the spirit returns to God who gave it (Eccles. xii. 7). It must be admitted that in the early period the consciousness of immortality was not given much moral weight, for Moses always spoke of punishments in this world, and held out no prospect of future compensation. Moreover, in the Old Testament the continued life of the soul after death is neither clearly defined nor explicitly proved. Yet we should fail to do justice to the Hebrew conception of man as a personality whose essence is the spirit, if we refused to grant it an allusion to immortality as inseparable from the very nature of the soul. Rabbi Geiger says: "The emphatic manner in which reference is made to spiritual power, to God as a living spirit, and to man as living through the spirit;

— this deep conviction, permeating all the Scriptures, is a guarantee that, according to Jewish belief, the spirit is everlasting and is not cut off at death."

The undeniable gaps in the Old Testament doctrine of immortality may appear, regarded in themselves, as defects, but we can account for them if we study the religious and historical position of the Chosen People. As God's own people all their religious thoughts and feelings referred to supernatural revelation, and they had not, like pagan nations that were left to their own resources, any need to enter upon the toilsome path of philosophy. Consequently they were comparatively late in arriving at a clear conception of the soul and its continued existence. In the early ages of Judaism this existence was vaguely supposed to be in Sheol, a somewhat unattractive abode of the dead below the earth; the psychological premises essential to a clearly defined doctrine regarding immortality were wanting. Nevertheless this lack is not enough to account for the scant treatment of the faith in immortality that we find in the earlier Old Testament writers, who admittedly held a supernatural view of world and life.

Why, then, do the hopes that they awaken, and the rewards they promise, stop short at this world, so that there are comparatively few and scanty references to a future life? The reason must be sought in the peculiar mission assigned by Providence to the Jewish race. This was to foretell and prepare the Messianic Kingdom, and therefore the immediate aim of the race was centred in this life, and the hope of immortality was meantime overshadowed by the expectation of the Messiah. In the frequently renewed promise that God Himself would establish His kingdom on earth through the agency of the Messiah, the Israelites found a sufficient satisfaction of their hopes and aspirations, so that they thought less of the kingdom of heaven, and even later the idea of salvation through the Messiah retained its prominence. This limitation of their desires to God's kingdom on earth was at first as unavoidable as harmless, in fact we may go so far as to pronounce it beneficial, since it united all the efforts and interests of the race and centred them upon the one thing of primary necessity, viz., the formation of a true people of God in the midst of heathen nations who had forsaken and forgotten Him. It would be a short-sighted and

mistaken estimate if we regarded the Jewish concentration upon this world of sense as essentially inferior to that of pagan religions, such as the Egyptian, which professed a belief in immortality. Moreover, the complete realization of the new kingdom of God, in which sin and all its consequences are to be destroyed, is incompatible with the dominion of death and of Sheol.

While the writers and prophets of primitive times had to guard pure religion against lapsing into heathen idolatry, a different task was assigned to those of a later period. In Egypt, as well as in Palestine, Judaism became infected with the materialism of the Epicurean school, which found zealous and influential adherents among the Sadducees. Consequently the belief in immortality appears more pronounced in the books of the Bible that date from this period, especially in Ecclesiasticus, the Book of Wisdom, and the Second Book of Machabees. Nor was it any longer vague and obscure, but abounded in philosophical ideas, which clearly reveal the influence already exerted by Greek thought upon the intellectual life of the Jews.

The close association of a resurrection of the body with the immortality of the soul is particularly noteworthy. Since man was regarded in his entirety, it was impossible, unless death was to be considered the end of all things, to think of the separation of body and soul as anything but a temporary condition, that would end with the resurrection of the body. This view resulted from the belief that God had not originally intended men to die, but that owing to their sins they were to be temporarily subject to death. Hence the ideas of immortality and resurrection were treated as inseparable, to stand and fall together.

That our Lord Himself approved of this opinion is shown in His reply to the Sadducees' denial of the resurrection, when He referred to the immortality of the soul (Matth. xxii. 32), and St. Paul adopted a similar course in speaking to the turbulent spirits at Corinth (1 Cor. xv. 29).

As their longing for the Messiah increased, a vastly greater attention was paid by the Jews to the doctrine of the future life. They expected His coming to be the prelude to the end of the world, and they began to elaborate the future life exactly in accordance with their own tastes. Such speculation appealed greatly to the Jewish love for the mysterious, and it

was encouraged by the lamentable political and social conditions of the world at that time. An additional impulse was given to the play of imagination by the Greek ideas of the life to come, because allusions to them were believed to occur in the sacred books. Much of the Greek mythology was either Judaized, or mixed with Jewish views, and formed into one system with Judaism; the apocryphal books contain many instances of this process. Even though Christianity exerted an influence upon the later Jewish doctrine concerning the last things, the sense element continued to predominate, and the apocalyptic revelations, to which the Christians gave a spiritual meaning, were interpreted literally by the Jews.

Rabbis of a latter period delighted in depicting the other world in glowing colors, according to the standard of our earthly needs and circumstances, and in this respect some of them actually rivaled the Mahometans. The dead are described as a merry band of revellers, and God is given the degraded place of being their host and chief entertainer. Rabbi Jehosha ben Levi succeeded, it is said, in fooling the angel of death, and crept by stealth into heaven, where with God's consent he remained for seven years a sojourner in this blissful land of elysium. All the magnificence, delight, and luxury that the glowing imagination of an Oriental might conceive, is, according to this Rabbi, contained in the seven palaces of Paradise. The just, who have been separated by death, meet again in a world that seems created only to gratify the concupiscence of the eyes and the desires of the flesh.

Another argument against the universality of belief in the immortality of the soul is derived from the fact that it is denied by some civilized persons who still call themselves Christians. Their number is, however, very small in comparison with that of believers. La Bruyère writes: "I should like to meet one sober, temperate, just and chaste man who denies the existence of God and the immortality of the soul; he would at least be unprejudiced, but such a man does not exist." Kant, in his work on Swedenborg, remarks that probably no honest man ever lived on earth who could endure the idea that everything ended at death. Cicero and other pagan philosophers have expressed similar opinions.

Everlasting happiness is the reward of morality, and the be-

lief in eternity is a moral act, and not merely a necessary consequence of thought or a result of dry calculation. The more life gains in moral worth, the greater is the certainty of survival. Whoever lives in and with God and according to His will is convinced that he will live for ever; and especially at times when he is forsaken by all men and left alone with God he sets his whole faith on the existence to come. Doubt is the inevitable consequence of a moral bankruptcy that has nothing to hope and everything to fear in a future life. A man who spends his time in trivialities and worldly pursuits comes to have an acute sense of his own worthlessness and treats it as a presentiment of impending annihilation; if he himself lacks strength for any moral action, he ceases to believe in the morality of others, and how can he believe in an eternal reward of virtue if he denies its existence?

Besides those who are brought by interested motives to the practical denial of God and of a future life, there seem to be theoretical unbelievers, who have arrived at absolute want of faith, without losing their sense of natural duty. Frederick II, who made no secret of his religious nihilism, said in a letter to d'Argens, "It is not necessary for me to live, but very necessary for me to do my duty." On the other hand de la Mettrie, the author of some vulgar writings and a notorious debauchee, who sought in materialism a justification for his vices, admits that a future life is possible, and in confirmation of this statement he appeals to the transformation of the caterpillar into the butterfly.

An anonymous writer says: "I made acquaintance with people who led a blameless life, were faithful to their duties and solicitous for the welfare of others, and yet acknowledged frankly their inability to believe in God's existence. I found others who not only talked pious language, but appeared to be influenced by pious motives, and yet were full of human frailty, so that their actions contradicted their words. This made me perplexed and gave me food for thought." We do well to ponder over facts such as these, but we need not doubt the truth that belief in God and immortality is a moral necessity, the foundation of all true morality. Natural goodness, a good education, the example of others, respect for inherited traditions and customs, regard for the honor of one's family and

class, fear of the natural consequences of vice, — these and similar influences imperceptibly affect more or less a man's moral character, and give him a sort of cosmopolitan respectability sufficient to meet most of the emergencies of life, so that at first sight it seems to stand on a level with the conscientiousness founded on religion. Believers who are without these various incentives to morality must often admit, especially under exceptional conditions, that the spirit is willing but the flesh weak. Moreover there are unhappily Christians who are content to appear virtuous without being so; who make religion a cloak for their evil passions and vices, and so bring it into discredit. It is not, however, fair to disparage the moral force of living faith just because a dead faith has no greater, and hypocritical faith less, power to produce genuine morality than frank unbelief.

Many lose their belief in a future life in consequence of a one-sided education that has warped mind and heart. Man is saved, not by lifeless knowledge, but by living faith. The consciousness of immortality must be a part of life if it is not to die out, and it loses its vigor as soon as it ceases to be felt as a source of consolation and energy. A mere idea that affords no nourishment or stimulus to the heart cannot permanently retain its hold upon the mind. Already the pagans of old realized this fact, for in the Eleusinian mysteries they strengthened the sense of immortality and strove to raise it to the plane of ecstasy. Perhaps we may follow Drummond and speak of spiritual senses, corresponding to sight, hearing, taste, and touch. Like the bodily organs these senses remain undeveloped if they are not used, and they grow atrophied if they are permanently neglected or violently checked in their normal activity. As soon as one of the organs through which we have communication with the outer world refuses its service, we are cut off from a definite part of real experience; a blind man cannot appreciate the beauties of nature or art; a deaf man has no sense for music. The pure in heart will see God; and they alone can steadfastly believe in God and everlasting life. "You do not believe," said our Lord, "because you are not of my sheep; my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (John x. 26, 27). Those who follow their own evil lusts forsake Christ's fold and do not hear His voice. It is as natural

for man to look up and to desire eternal life as it is for a plant to turn towards the light. To deny God and despise immortality is a mark of perverted intelligence, due to some natural or acquired defect. Whoever of his own accord or at the instigation of others has turned away from God, and refuses to hear the voice of reason and conscience, will gradually grow less susceptible to higher things, and consequently cease to concern himself with the other world until he finally denies its existence. Moreover, when he has cast aside all personal interest in the supernatural, he will not tolerate it in others, and will question the evidence furnished by the universality of the belief in eternal life.

As there are men who refuse to believe in immortality, there are also men who refuse to believe in God, and in each case their unbelief is due to the same ideas and motives.

The rancorous spirit of many unbelievers seems to proceed from a perverse kind of moroseness, resulting from the violent repression of their longing for continued existence. Their fondness for the subject of immortality gives reason to suspect in them a secret anxiety, after the manner of a boy who whistles in the dark to hide his fear of ghosts. Many who during life ridiculed immortality suddenly changed their attitude when death approached them, and their sneers at the terrors of the other world often ended in cowardly whimpering. Voltaire screamed in terror on his death-bed, and asked for a priest, but his friends would not allow one to be summoned. C. J. Weber, the frivolous and somewhat flippant author of *Democritus,* wrote a chapter on the absurdity of fearing death, but nevertheless he is careful to say: "I cannot tell whether, when my last hour comes, I shall not behave like certain people whose actions have belied their words." Even free-thinkers are unwilling to surrender the last vestiges of belief in immortality, for they speak of living on in their works, and in the memory of their friends, and cannot face the thought of ceasing to exist for good and all. Not even those who profess that man's individuality is absorbed in the substance of the great universal Spirit can rid themselves of the idea of personal survival. "Whatever line of thought we may adopt," says Schelling, "we can never get rid of our own *ego,* and we are simply incapable of picturing our non-existence without at the same

time thinking of ourselves as existing." He adds that Spinoza made a mistake when he supposed himself identical with the absolute Object, and lost in its infinity. Hardly any dreamer would have found pleasure in the idea of being absorbed in the abyss of the Deity if he had not invariably put his own *ego* in the place of God.

The strength of the craving for immortality, even in the midst of modern materialism, is revealed by that sinister and often ridiculous craze which the tendency of our age has brought to the surface again, — I mean modern belief and interest in spiritistic manifestations. Many souls, with a surfeit of worldly amusements and failing to find peace in unbelief, have been impelled by bitter disappointment to follow the example of the prodigal son and return to their Father's house, and there have found comfort. But others have been ashamed, or too proud, to tread this path, and instead of seeking help of our Lord and His Church, they have turned to the pagan belief in spirits. When Christianity with its vigor and abounding vitality is cast aside, there is nothing left but to quicken the dead carcass of paganism, or at least to galvanize it into a semblance of life. Where the bright light of faith is extinguished, our ineradicable longing for a supernatural world makes men seek in fancies and delusions something to replace the lost heritage. There is much truth in Pascal's remark, "Unbelievers are of all men the most credulous," and in the old saying, "Where unbelief is installed and at home, superstition stands on the doorstep"; while Goethe, if he were still alive, would repeat his words, "Unbelief is like an inverted superstition and it has become the craze of our age." A heart that has ceased to find sustenance in a faith based on dogmas and consecrated by ancient traditions, looks elsewhere for compensation, and becomes as fruitful a nursery for every kind of foolish enthusiasm as a piece of waste land is for weeds. Hence a debased and barren view of life has led men to the most absurd superstitions, and has popularized extravagant conceptions of the world beyond the grave, such as hitherto only a savage might have formed. Spiritism, in spite of its absurdities, has become for hundreds of thousands a haven of refuge or even a religion, and its adherents are most numerous in the large centres of civilization. Members of the highest social strata at-

tend the séances and listen to the rubbish which spirits are supposed to utter through the so-called "mediums." This mania is a penalty for the gross unbelief which declares man to be formed of matter and to return again to it. As a just punishment for men's audacity in denying and despising all spiritual life, a wave of materialism has broken over the world, which represents spirits as tangible, visible, and audible, and "materializes" not only spirits but even thoughts. According to Friese good thoughts are pink and bad ones blue in color. Spirits claim that through a medium they can place themselves in sensible communication with the spirit world; they regard this discovery as of priceless value and demand for it our recognition and gratitude. Some of the most eminent spiritists, such as Perty, Zöllner, Fichte, Ulrici, Wallace, Edmonds, etc., think that by means of spiritism they can revive men's faith in immortality, and they welcome the alleged apparitions of spirits as undeniable evidence of man's continued personal existence, as well as of his permanent consciousness of his own identity.

Spiritists fancy that through their mediums they have revived the traditions and customs of classical antiquity, and they regard the fact that spiritism has been practised at every stage of civilization as convincing proof of its truth and of its power to satisfy the needs and desires of human nature. We cannot deny that it possesses a certain degree of universality; it is not an accidental or isolated phenomenon, for every race, from barbarous savages to the most highly educated nations, has sought to conjure up and question the dead, and this practice has prevailed continually during the centuries of the Christian era. And if it occasionally seemed to have died out, it has invariably been revived with renewed force, although perhaps it has never assumed so gross and crude a form as at the present day.

This spread of superstitious necromancy is a disastrous but most important phenomenon. There can be no error without truth, just as there can be no counterfeit coin without good money, and no negation without an affirmation. Spiritism has found acceptance far and wide, and owes its influence to a great truth that lays hold upon the innermost feelings of human nature.

After all, we need not deny that the spiritistic tendency may be the outcome of noble and justifiable impulses, stimulated by

the attractive prospect of realizing through its means certain hopes and aspirations that are otherwise beyond our reach. Deep within every mind made in God's likeness there is a craving for the supernatural and the permanent, and this craving reveals itself violently and spontaneously even in uncivilized nations. Every human being strives to escape the limitations of time and finiteness, and wishes to live on in a better world. "However much man may have developed and exalted Nature," says Guizot, "he is never satisfied with it, but continues to look forward to something in another world." This craving for the infinite shows itself in an eagerness for proofs, obvious to the senses, of a continued existence after death; and if a man lacks the certainty supplied by faith, he is ready to fall a victim to necromancy and superstition, especially at a time when he is feeling the pain of parting from those dear to him; the bitterness and persistence of this pain can be measured only by his love, and this is stronger than death. A heart, aching with the sense of loss, cannot help hoping for a joyful reunion in another better world; but this is not enough, it believes also that the departed remain in continual communication with the living. This faith is most closely connected with the hope of immortality, and is in fact its natural outcome. But when a mind that does not rise above this world pictures the next life as a mere prolongation of our life here below, it seeks or, as the case may be, fears, continued intercourse with the dead, and that in a very crude and material fashion.

Faith and Hope put us in touch with the next world. They give us sufficient assurance concerning the fate of our dear departed ones. Prayer reinforces this confidence and affords more comfort than any supposed message from a discarnate soul can give. This the more so as there always remains the practical impossibility of establishing the identity of the communicating spirit. But doubt under the circumstances is most distressing and harassing and eventually defeats the very end for which the communication was sought. The anguish caused by the torturing doubt will be more poignant than the sorrow that grows out of the bereavement. On this subject Fr. Herbert Thurston, S.J., says (in *Studies,* December, 1919, page 369): "It may be doubted whether the consolation thus resulting is commonly of a very permanent nature. Experience shows, I fear, that

in too many cases while the craving for fresh assurance grows ever stronger, the evidence supplied by the mediumistic séance grows more and more faint. Doubts begin to awaken and the resulting anguish of mind is bitter indeed." Hence the inquirer about the Life after Death can expect no valid answers to his questions from Spiritism. Indeed, persistency in seeking information by spiritistic practices often leads to insanity and suicide. The obscenity, furthermore, that is prominent in spiritual practices and messages, according to Godfrey Raupert (*The Homiletic Monthly and Pastoral Review,* January, 1920), and the obvious deceit and falsehood that characterize many of the spirit manifestations must warn against placing confidence in spiritistic revelations, because these and other things furnish abundant ground for the supposition that they have their source in demonic intervention.

Spiritism is a reaction from the violent repression of man's consciousness and craving for immortality; it is opposed to materialism, and therein lies its only value. Man may for a time accustom himself to the worship of matter and the flesh; he may live like a beast, but sooner or later he finds it unendurable to think of himself as ranking with the animal.

Superstition is widely spread only because faith is universal, and this latter fact is an indication which may safely be followed. A hope of immortality existing in every place and in every age cannot be illusory, and what all men unanimously assert must be true. Error is a weakness or malady of the mind, not the product of its nature, and hence cannot be a universal phenomenon. The sense perceptions of mankind collectively cannot rest on deception, neither can a judgment on matters of morals and religion, delivered by mankind as a whole, be fundamentally erroneous. There have in every age been insane people, but no one has on this account denied the existence of sound reason or questioned the principles on which its deductions are based. It is true that crazes may sometimes take root in healthy minds, and like the bacilli of an epidemic may infect whole nations. Among such mental maladies we may reckon the various forms of superstition; but this can occur only where certain conditions exist, and although they may spread very widely they never become so universal as the true perceptions, of which they are but parasitic growths.

Moreover, they die away or alter in course of time, for error changes like the fashions, but truth, on which it preys, remains ever the same.

If our faith in immortality were mistaken, it would be an error unparallelled in the whole history of civilization. No question is of such directly practical significance, or touches all human thought, feeling, aspirations, and actions so closely as that concerning a future life. Is it possible that men in every age and country, of every race and religion, should have erred on a point of such vital importance? It is not fair to retort that the Ptolemaic system was likewise universally accepted for a time, and afterwards universally discarded. The very fact that the geocentric theory had to give place to the heliocentric is significant, for in spite of all attacks and ridicule on the part of those who deny immortality, mankind in general have persistently clung to their faith in it. Moreover, the Ptolemaic system was based on the evidence of the senses, and had apparently truth on its side, whereas faith in eternity depends upon the reason, and has not apparently truth on its side, for the law of death prevails in nature around us, and the human body becomes corrupt and decays. To brand our hope of continued existence after death as erroneous is equivalent to pronouncing reason worthless, and the bulk of mankind insane; but even so such insanity would be a boon, since it produces most beneficial consequences in private and social life.

Attempts have been made to diminish the weight of the evidence derived from our universal consciousness of immortality by suggesting that this consciousness is due to either accidental or external causes. Psychologists and ethnologists have striven to explain the idea of continued existence after death as the result of dreams. They say that a savage, who in a dream sees the dead acting as they acted in life, in his childlike simplicity regards them as really living, and this pleasant deception, in which of course many other savages share, hardens into a firm conviction.

An attempt to undertake a solution of the problem of the universality of belief in another life by suggesting fresh problems is not a compliment to the sagacity of these men of science. A savage sees in his dreams not only human beings, but also

the kangaroos, buffaloes, reindeer killed by him, and yet a faith in the continued existence of animals is of rare occurrence. Such belief is found more frequently among civilized than among uncivilized people. The natives of Kamchatka extend their belief in the resurrection of the flesh to the tiniest fly, and the Fiji Islanders suppose that not only animals, but even cocoanuts will some day enjoy new life. Some English theologians (F. O. Morris, *Records of Animal Sagacity and Character,* London, 1861; Egerton Smith, *The Elysium of Animals,* London, 1836) have joined the company of these benighted savages in asserting that the souls of animals are immortal and even destined to be reunited with their bodies. Among modern spiritists also there are those who worship animals, and enthusiastically uphold their immortality. Allan Kardec, the leader of the French spiritists, tells us, on the strength of spirit revelations, that an animal soul after death passes into another creature and attains gradually to a higher status. The editor of *Licht, mehr Licht!* supports this belief by facts, and states that a dead farmer appeared in the company of his dog. The Belgian Spiritist paper, *Le Messager,* made its readers happy with a poem purported to have been sent from the other world by the soul of a jack rabbit that had ended its earthly career. In Paris the parent bird of young goldfinches was summoned from the animals' Elysium to name their slayer, and in Ohio the spirit of a stolen ox was cited to name the thief. The psychological mountebanks, who attribute the belief in immortality to dreams, cannot object to the application of their views to the animal kingdom. Further, they ought to explain why the dream picture, that invariably turns out to be a deception when we awaken, was nevertheless in this case accepted as true, and as the basis for a conviction both universal and ineradicable. The unprejudiced thinker would inevitably arrive at the opposite conclusion, and declare that belief in apparitions presupposes the idea of immortality; that it is a proof, and not the cause of its existence. The departed have not ceased to live, and therefore they can still appear to survivors. Indeed, were the craving for immortality not innate in the soul, no foreboding of it could ever have happened in dreams.

Not less absurd is the theory which of late years has gone rather out of fashion, that belief in immortality, like religion

in general, is a result of education, a fiction invented by priests and lawgivers.

Of course the menace of future retribution is a very efficacious means of deterring men from evil-doing and accustoming them to discipline and morality. As a matter of fact, however, the idea of retribution, as we have seen, is less prevalent among nations of a low degree of civilization than among enlightened peoples.

Learned men, who say that there is no such thing as an innate desire for eternal life, but that all the higher needs and aspirations of the human mind are of accidental origin and artificial development, depict the first men as creatures resembling animals, with as yet no glimmer of human reason. Man in the uncivilized state they represent as a being able indeed to use his imagination, but not his powers of argument. They would have us believe that a primitive man, such as Darwin described, hit upon the wonderfully clever idea that an immortal soul resided in his mortal body. Now no individual, far less all mankind collectively, would have had any conception of immortality had not reason from her first awakening almost forced upon him the idea of the continued existence of the soul; such an idea being the outcome of a natural, because congenital, instinct. Even supposing that, though man saw himself surrounded by death and corruption, some inkling of this truth had flashed into his mind, how could it have become the common property of the whole human race? Who could have persuaded his fellow mortals, sunk in a purely sensuous existence, to adopt a belief that would at once give another tendency to all their thoughts and aspirations, and dominate their whole view of life? No one could hope for success in preaching immortality unless his words found an echo in the hearts of his hearers. Even should we assume that men, in the childhood of their race, had been so simple as to allow themselves to be convinced of the truth of the doctrine, still, as they advanced to higher stages of education, their increased knowledge and intelligence would have caused them to renounce it. But, as it is, the wisest and best of mankind cling to this belief as to a priceless treasure, and have at all times been willing to sacrifice all the good things of life, and even life itself, to indicate their conviction.

Whereas our hope of survival after death is not the outcome of education, all sound education must be based on faith in immortality, just as in nature all growth is due to the action of sunlight. As in the shadowy recesses of the jungle poisonous plants especially flourish, so in education the poison of the evil propensities of our nature abounds where the rays of the sunlight of eternity cannot penetrate. The consciousness that a supernatural Spirit has given us a law, that His all-seeing eye watches how we observe it, and that at the end of our course He will be our Judge and sentence us according to our deserts, — this consciousness forms the best of all moral training and is an effectual, often the only effectual, stimulus to right conduct.

How, then, must we suppose that the belief in continued existence after death originated and became universal? The only answer that we can give is that this belief was absolutely indispensable to mankind. We cannot do without it, because, in consequence of an innate, instinctive requirement of nature, all rational thought is impelled to demand it, for it is the original dowry of the soul, which itself is the likeness and breath of the Everlasting God. The soul realizes the necessity of continued existence, and employs it as evidence that it will live for ever. Montaigne, Nicolas, Huber, and many others have laid stress on this fact. Louise Hensel, well-known for her beautiful poetry, writes: "Belief in immortality must be innate in the mind of man, and it is so firmly rooted that no force can destroy it, and only a perverse sense has in the case of Christians and Jews evoked a denial of it. There are unhappily people, too common at the present time, who have no wish for continued existence, because they prefer to live as mere animals. . . . Even on the score of mere logic I cannot understand how a beautiful and highly gifted human soul, with its boundless faculties and powers, can imagine itself to have been created to last only as long as the longest human life. It would be foolish to take so much pains about a trifle, for life on this earth would be nothing but a piteous trifle, if there were no life after death and no retribution in the future. We might in that case complain bitterly that we had been created simply to suffer, for all the joys and glories of earth are worthless, since they end so soon. If the human soul had no eternity

in view it would exist to no purpose. . . . From my twelfth to my fourteenth year I suffered horribly, for the devil assailed me with dreadful doubts, even though I had never heard or read anything of the kind; yet even then I do not think that I doubted the immortality of the soul. That a spirit should cease to exist would at all times have seemed to me inconceivable."

The argument deduced from the universal belief in immortality is, of course, not direct proof, but still it has sufficient weight to make it plain that such belief is well founded. It is the touchstone of the other proofs derived from the nature of the soul and of God's perfections, and it confirms and ratifies them. It is based on the principle that all that is of native, and not artificial growth; all that is not labored, but spontaneous; all that is not isolated, but universal; all that is permanent; and all that proceeds vigorously from the nature of a sane mind is a healthy growth, and as such must be compatible with philosophic thought and must be true, because the mind is naturally endowed with reason. Our sense of immortality springs irresistibly from the depths of our souls; it needs no skilful combinations or tedious logical operations, but is as spontaneous as the blooming of the flowers in spring; it is an original possession and an inalienable heritage of human nature. Hence we may conclude that this belief must be true, and that philosophers who undervalue the voice of reason, speaking through the unanimity of all nations, are simply the victims of their own crazy phantasies, outraging thereby the fundamental sanity of human intelligence.

Visible nature and the whole universe may perish, but the soul of man will live on. This is the great thought that inspires noble deeds, and affords consolation as death approaches, so that he ceases to be the cruel reaper, cutting short all life, or the grim-visaged robber who deprives us of our all. He is a friendly messenger from the land of immortality, and he comes to summon his Master's favorites to their heavenly banquet; to the poor, the sick, and the persecuted he brings merciful release; he bestows peace and joy upon all who have gathered treasures for the life to come. Earth is like a dark, cold valley, lighted by rays from the sun of eternity, which penetrate even the graves. The pilgrims here, illumined by this light, press

on hopefully towards the kingdom above; they long to reach it, since it offers to them what is great, eternal, and divine. To a Christian there is no break between life here and life hereafter; the two form one unbroken existence; this life is a preparation for the next, and that life is a continuation of our life here. On earth we learn and labor, we sorrow and suffer, for it is a school where we receive the training that must have been completed when death comes.

. . .

"Death once met a virtuous man, who welcomed him as the messenger of eternity. — 'What?' said Death, 'are you, the child of sin, not afraid of me?' — 'No,' was the reply, 'a man who has no reason to fear himself, has no reason to fear you.' — 'Do you not dread the diseases that are my heralds, and the cold sweat dropping from my wings?' — 'No,' said the good man. 'And why are you so fearless?' — 'Because diseases and cold sweat announce your presence, and I am a Christian.' — Death then breathed upon him, and immediately neither Death nor a mortal man were present. There was at my feet only an open grave, with something in it. I wept, and at once divine voices made me raise my eyes to the heavens, and I beheld there the Christian, still smiling, as he had smiled at death. Radiant spirit came to welcome him, and his spirit shone like them. I looked down to the grave, perceiving now what lay therein, — it was but the Christian's worn out garment" (Lavater).

"Father of immortality! Strengthen my faith in Thy immortality and my own. Thou hast life in Thyself, and Thy children receive it from Thee; teach me to believe this with as firm and lively a faith as if I were already singing the new song in the choir of deathless spirits. In this faith I can do all things. What is mortality in comparison with immortality? O Father, may I never lose this faith, and never waver in it! May this hope, that is beyond all other hopes, never fail me" (Bishop Sailer).

This is the true consolation and comfort for the heart; those that despise it may seek satisfaction in the Pantheistic Nirvana, or in the final annihilation proclaimed by Materialists, or in the unknown and unknowable X of Positivists and Agnostics.

Let them sample the comfort offered by the Italian poet Leopardi, who writes:

> There is nought so precious thou should seek it;
> And the earth deserveth not a sigh. But
> weary bitterness is life, nought else, and
> ashes is the world. Be now at peace. Despair
> for the last time. Unto our race did Fate
> give nought but death.
>
> LEOPARDI, *Poems*, XXVIII, *To Himself*, trans. Cliffe.

CHAPTER V

IN THE LIFE TO COME WE SHALL MEET AGAIN

AMONG all nations the faith in immortality is closely connected with the hope of a joyful reunion with those who have passed away. The people of Hindostan pictured heaven as a world where change was unknown, and where they would meet their parents. Their earliest religious book, the *Rig-Veda,* contains the following farewell to the dead: "There shalt thou find our fathers, there Yama, the first of the human race, and the reward of virtue in the highest heaven. Return to thy home, free of all defects, and assume the body, resplendent with new strength."

The Iranians or Persians held very similar views. They thought that at the end of time the good god Ormuzd would come with great power to put an end to the evil caused by the wicked Ahriman. A redeemer, Sosiosh, would be sent to the earth, and at his voice all the dead would arise from their graves; the first being Caiomorts, the androgynal ancestor of the human race, and after him Meschin and Meschiane, the first man and woman, and then all generations of men in endless succession. The dust of the deceased would again be gathered into bodies, each soul would recognize the body in which it had dwelt on earth, and resume possession of it. Those who had once known and loved each other would meet with joyous shouts of welcome, "Behold, my father, my mother, my wife, my child!"

The singular people of China have similar ideas. Their two noble philosophers Chung-tse (born 551 B.C.) and Lao-tse (born 604 B.C.) do not, however, discuss them in detail. The former bade his pupil Ki-lu to pay due honors to his forefathers, and to act as if they were witnessing all his actions. All who have proved themselves faithful children of the divine Tao will, ac-

cording to Lao-tse, be united with him after death, they will be clothed with eternity, and their life will offer no vulnerable point to hostile influences.

Cicero lived in hopes of being one day reunited with Cato, famous for his wisdom. Seneca, writing of a deceased friend, says (*Consolat. ad Marciam*): "Being now raised aloft, he walks among the happy souls and is welcomed by the sacred throng of the followers of Scipio and Cato, who despised death, and are now free through the kindly action of death. Thy father, O Marcia, received his grandson, who delights in the new splendor, and teaches him the course of the stars and initiates him into the mysteries of nature."

The faith of the Greeks in reunion found touching expression in poetry and legends, especially in those relating to Orpheus and Odysseus. Eurydice, the wife of Orpheus, stung by a viper, died, to the intense grief of her husband. The sweet singer who had tamed wild beasts and moved trees and rocks by the sweet strains of his lyre, now sought to touch the heart of the god of the nether world, and at last his mournful songs opened to him the gates of Hades. He went down, unhindered by Cerberus, and reached the throne of the dread god, where he evoked such sad chords from his lyre and accompanied them with such pitiful entreaties, that the Eumenides, the goddesses of vengeance, for the first time shed tears. Tantalus forgot his torments, and even Hades was moved to compassion and restored Eurydice to her husband, bidding him, however, not to look back for her until he had returned to the upper world. His desire to see her made him disregard the god's prohibition; just before reaching the exit, Orpheus turned round, and stretched out his arms towards his wife, when like a shadow she vanished. For seven days and nights he wept on the shore of Acheron before returning to the upper world, where he passed the remainder of his days in solitude and grief. Out of loyalty to Eurydice he avoided all women, and was for this torn to pieces by the furious Maenads. Thus he was enabled to go down to the world of spirits, where he was united with Eurydice for ever. The bodies of the souls roaming on the Asphodel meadow had been burnt or were decayed, but the souls were recognized by Odysseus as soon as they had drunk the blood of the ram and the black sheep. He met

Agamemnon, Alcinous, Elpenor, Ajax, Patroclus, Achilles, and many others, and at length he saw his mother Anticleia, who had died of sorrow on his account; thrice did he try in vain to embrace her shade. Ever greater grew the crowd of shades surrounding him, and he knew who they all were; some were old acquaintances, others he had never seen before. After drinking of the blood, their memory is revived, and they recognize Odysseus, who at last is seized with terror. The Roman poet Vergil describes the visit of Aeneas to Hades in a manner very similar to the account given by Homer of Odysseus. The story of Protesilaus and Laodameia certainly contains the idea of reunion after death, for the wife kills herself in order to be with her husband, who was the first to fall at Troy. The Alexandrine poets represent Protesilaus as returning from the nether world and as dying a second time, whereupon Laodameia sought death of her own accord, being overwhelmed by grief.

The Greeks and Romans pictured the good as meeting on the Islands of the Blest in Elysium, and as there enjoying games and feasts, yet only a few initiated were fortunate enough to make their way thither. Numerous inscriptions of Greek and Roman antiquity show that it was usual to wish for the dead a continuation of the pleasures in which, as Epicureans, they had indulged on earth. Paganism in general transferred, in a more or less gross form, the circumstances, needs, and amusements of this life to the next. Comparatively there were but a few great men in classical times who conceived the joys of Paradise to consist chiefly in intellectual delights; the great majority expected in the other life an increase of earthly happiness.

In consequence, on the one hand, of this crude idea of the future life, and, on the other hand, of the love that is stronger than death and craves reunion with the beloved dead, many nations of pagan antiquity fell into the same errors as the uncivilized nations of the present day. As Plato says, many would voluntarily go down to Hades to be with those for whose company they longed. Among the ancient Germans such voluntary sacrifices formed part of the funeral rites. Brunhilde stabbed herself that she might be burnt with Sigurd, and her maidens followed her example. Sigey hanged herself, that

she might accompany Hagbarth to the next world. According to old Keltic custom, everything that a man had used or possessed in life was burned with his corpse; and letters were given him addressed to those already dead, sometimes even promissory notes, payable in the other world. During the reign of Olaf Tragvanson, before the introduction of Christianity into Sweden, it was usual for a wife to seek the grave with her dead husband. The Wends praised a widow who killed herself in order to be burnt on the same pyre with her deceased husband; and the same practice was common in Thrace. With regard to the funeral customs in use among the pagan Russians on the Volga, an Arab legate, Ibn Fosslan, wrote a very interesting work in the year 922, from which some extracts were published at Petrograd in 1823. Ibn Fosslan was present at the burning of a body, which, adorned with various sorts of treasures, was placed in a boat that was then set on fire. Of her own accord a maiden stepped on to the boat to dedicate herself to death, and cried: "Lo, I behold my father and my mother! I see all my dead kinsfolk sitting round; and there, too, is my lord, sitting in Paradise, which is so beautiful. With him are his retainers and servants; he is calling me, so let me go to him." The Prussians of pagan times used to dress the dead man in white garments and set him on a chair; then they drank his health and commissioned him to greet from them the friends whom he would meet in the other life. We have already seen how much the heathen peoples of the present day are influenced by their longing to meet departed friends and ancestors. This feeling was expressed in a very touching manner at the great Festival of the Dead, celebrated by the "Five Nations." The dead man was placed in his cabin and addressed by the chief or some other prominent member of the tribe in the following terms: "Brother, thou art still in our midst; thy body still preserves its wonted form; but where is the breath, which but a few hours ago sent up smoke to the great Spirit? Why are thy lips silent? Why are thy feet motionless and thy hands rigid? We are not mourning, as though thou wert gone from us for ever, or as if thy name should never more be heard. Thy soul lives on in the great land of the spirits, among the souls of thy brethren, who have gone before thee. We are left behind to preserve thy fame, but some day we shall follow

thee. Inspired by the respect we felt for thee in life, we now come to do thee the last service of love. We lay thy body to rest with the bodies of thy ancestors, hoping that thy spirit may feast with theirs; that it will be ready to welcome ours, when we, too, reach the great land of our forefathers." In a song chanted over the dead by negroes on the coast of Benin the words occur, "Will meet again; Goodnight."

Sensual Mahometans and pious Hindoos, intellectual Greeks and worldly minded Romans, primitive Germans and barbarous Scythians, self-possessed Indians and playful South Sea Islanders, easy-going Negroes and gloomy Australians, despised Hottentots and savage Fuegians — all believe in life after death, and all look forward with joy to a reunion with the departed. What conclusion are we to draw from this fact? Is it possible that the hope planted at every new grave is nothing but a delusion, by which sorrowing hearts deceive themselves?

Every heart that has loved another human being feels the sorrow of separation and naturally desires reunion, but such longing is vain if it cannot be gratified. Since not a single natural impulse is futile, and not one rests upon a mere illusion, it follows that this longing, like all other cravings, must be satisfied in a higher existence.

It might be argued that the longing for reunion is a natural consequence of earthly relations, and as these will find no place in the other life, it follows that all the other connecting bonds, based on friendship and kindred, must perish at death. It is true that the bonds by which nature and selection unite human beings affect them chiefly in this life, but we may reasonably assume that they have some influence in the other world, which is peopled not exclusively by ascetics, hermits, or spinsters, but by all kinds of human beings. Moreover, on earth men are often united by spiritual affinities, and not only by the bonds of sense; souls are attracted to one another by a harmony of tastes and avoidances, and this attraction is often more powerful than the tie of blood. God wills the affection based on flesh and blood to be purified even here, by a love based on the spiritual, the ties of kindred to be ennobled by soul intimacy, and even nature aids in the realization of this aim. It is, however, only the longing for a continuance of the pure, unselfish

love of friendship that permanently affects the heart of a mourner.

If the numerous special relations employed by God to create, preserve, train, educate, sanctify, perfect, gladden, and comfort men were incapable or unworthy of being spiritualized in another life, and if they and all their consequences were cut short at death, nature would be deceiving those who remain behind by offering them in their bereavement hopes destined never to be fulfilled. She would be mocking their pain by adding to it a foolish and inappeasable longing. All nations speak of the dead as "gathered to their fathers," but this conveys no consolation if the fathers are no longer capable of love for the children who follow them. Does the Creator of nature, the God of truth, supply no other comfort to His children in their sorrow than a mere hope, the universality of which affords it a semblance of truth? He would, then, have done better to enable them to bury their love with the ashes of loved ones, instead of implanting in them a vain desire for a renewal of the happy intercourse enjoyed during their life on earth. A heart devoid of love would fare better than one filled with an affection which is productive only of pain. But, as it is, each human being is so constituted by nature as to be unable to live without love, and to prefer suffering to insensibility. Love knows no limitations of time or place; it is not quenched by the death of its object, but follows him beyond the grave into eternity. Let us feel assured that its significance and justification will be made manifest in the life to come. Such longing and desires cannot be due to mere empty illusion.

Materialists, who recognize no essential difference between man and the brute, ridicule the former for exalting himself so immeasurably above the latter. They say that he has no reason to pride himself upon his power of affection and upon its permanence, since an animal's love is no less noble, intense, and self-sacrificing, and so has the same claim to last for ever. An animal is, of course, not a machine without a soul, not an automaton, which, after receiving some external impulse, mechanically continues to move; but it is an organism having within it a living principle, which is the interior cause of its action. That animals can love has been proved again and again. Descartes is perhaps the only philosopher who ever

denied it. Maternal affection is very obvious among all animals; beetles, ants, and bees take great care of their larvae; every bird is ready to fight in defence of its young; it feeds them, though it may be hungry itself, and it plucks out its own feathers to line their nest. The feeblest mother beast shows fight in face of the strongest enemy when the safety of her little ones is at stake, and she will die rather than forsake them. A hen's solicitude for her chickens supplied our Lord with a most touching similitude of His tender love and care for His erring people. Animal love, however, is limited to the sphere of sense, and makes for the preservation and propagation of life. We may own that the instinct thus manifested cannot exactly be called blind, as its action is preceded by a certain knowledge and judgment based on the sense of appreciation. Animal love and knowledge are, nevertheless, unconscious, wholly dependent upon the organs of the body. By means of its senses an animal perceives other creatures and objects, and instinctively feels the bearing that they have upon its own existence and the preservation and propagation of its life. Through the force of necessity it conceives love or hatred and feels joy or fear, according as it perceives things to be beneficial or injurious. It is aware of its perceptions and feelings, but not reflexively. It cannot recognize their reason and purpose, nor does it think of itself as being aware of them. Unconsciously it struggles in the interest of self-preservation, unconsciously, too, it provides and suffers for the continuation of the species. Should these two impulses clash, the latter generally proves the stronger. The racial instinct prevails over the tendency to self-preservation, and parental affection takes precedence of self-love. At a moment of danger a mother dies for her offspring; she cannot do otherwise, though the sacrifice may be in vain. But her love for them vanishes just as soon as they are able to provide for themselves; her tender solicitude gives place not merely to indifference, but to actual hostility. It cannot be said that family affection exists among animals.

What a contrast with the strong bond formed by blood relation among even the most degraded type of savages. In spite of their barbarism even the lowest are not altogether without better feelings, and because they are able to think and to will,

and because they possess human affections, they are infinitely superior to animals however highly developed. Impartial and accurate observations have given us an appreciation of the psychology of savage races which differ greatly from the superficial impressions of the earlier ethnographers. Many savages are capable of true friendship, and even where no definite tribal or clan organization exists, they do not live in herds, like cattle, but in families. Moreover, in the case of animals the family ceases to exist as soon as the young can provide for themselves, whereas among even the lowest of mankind it continues beyond the grave. Wherever men live human nature reveals itself, and the mind, however undeveloped and distorted, is seen to be human, and gives evidence of a conscious love and goodwill, characteristics that no animal possesses.

No doubt instinct resides also in man, and its action is peculiarly visible where the intellect is not much developed. It shows itself less in persons whose intellect and morality are at a higher level, because in their case reflection and self-consciousness take its place or direct it. Nevertheless it exists and shows itself in that activity of the faculty of sense cognition which precedes the judgment of reason, and from the perceptions of the senses it produces the same knowledge and gives rise to the same efforts as it does in an animal; in other words, it makes for the preservation and propagation of bodily existence. But while we may allow that instinct has much to do with conjugal, parental, and filial affection, nevertheless human love is as far above animal affection as human consciousness is above animal knowledge. Love has its abode in the mind, and as soon as we speak of mental emotions, we cease to think of feelings which are, like those of animals, concerned with the senses. We think, then, of emotions conditioned by self-consciousness and free will. Most human love is of this kind. In the case of a mother, the sight of her newborn infant fills her with joy and delight. The child is to her far more than a crying bairn that instinctively stretches out its arms to her and turns its eyes to the light. The mere maternal instinct is satisfied if the infant is strong and lusty, but the human mother recognizes its likeness to herself and her husband, and knows that what is made in the Creator's image is the most precious gift that could be bestowed on her. Therefore she needs neither to

recall the pitiful cry of the pessimists that "by her fault the child has been dragged into existence," nor to speculate enthusiastically upon what he may become before she gladly accepts all the trouble and anxiety that the care of him will cost her.

It must be admitted that a mother's love is not purely spiritual; it is accompanied by strong emotions, and consequently the higher motives and the whole moral side of maternal love sometimes recede into the background and become unconscious. It is equally true that a mother is seldom or never able to give an account of the depth and happiness of her love; inasmuch as so many sides of her resourceful mind, which enables her to see the right course and perform heroic deeds when her stronger and more intelligent husband is utterly at a loss, are only faintly illumined by the light of consciousness. This fact may be ascribed to maternal instinct, but it is not animal instinct, which is surely too weak and low to account for its dignity and sense of duty, for its persistence, and, we may dare to say, its eternity. Love that is truly human is directed not merely towards the sensible, but also towards the intellectual and moral aspects of its object, and even the bond uniting members of one family stretches further than the mere instinct of sense. It is not broken off when the children grow up, although the purpose of instinct has been attained; moreover it is not limited to direct descendants, but embraces also collateral lines; it is not interrupted by death, but it follows the departed beyond the great gulf and into the next world.

The majority of dramatists and novelists, as we all know, are contented with the lower view of love, and many who profess to study the subject do not rise to any higher conception than is found in the poetry written by lovesick youths and maidens as an outlet for their sentimentality. Many who speak of love mean nothing but emotion, and do not go beyond the delineation of the pleasures of the senses. According to them it is a mistake, or even a desecration of the word love to apply it to gratitude, goodwill, or friendship. True conjugal love between Christians is not less unintelligible to them than the real signification of sexual passion. Being under the spell of the vulgar fascination of the senses, they have no feeling for the charm of moral qualities, they understand nothing of a preference based on reason and virtue. For such writers the community of souls which

grows out of mutual esteem, or the joy of a spiritual intercourse which is free from any taint of pruriency, remains a sealed book. At best they look upon love as a kind of game of chance in which a prize is won when two human beings are caught at first sight in the grip of a violent mutual attraction, incontinently admire and adore one another, and then exchange fervent vows of eternal affection. The mysterious thrill that causes two hearts to beat more quickly at their first introduction is certainly a condition and source of love, but the pleasing emotion which is due to sudden gratification at a person's outward appearance, and which leads to the assumption that external beauty is the expression of internal goodness, is apt to be attended by grievous disappointments. Overhasty marriages are seldom happy, and the union of two souls by a momentarily overpowering sense of admiration affords no guarantee of permanence, since the beauty that arouses this admiration soon passes away. He who seeks happiness in the flattery of the senses deceives himself and others, and is obliged to feign love and gratification of his desires; for ordinary love is shortlived, and the oaths taken without due consideration are often followed by lies, deceit, infidelity, and treachery.

In spite of the applause given to a false and unworthy representation of love, the faith in man's better self and in genuine, enduring love still exists. There are still young men and women who give the lie to the gross conceptions of popular novelists. Aware of a vocation to the married state, they desire to be united in body for the sake of their spiritual union, and each craves a partner with whom to live in and for God. With that partner on whom their choice falls they hope to share faith, hopes, work, anxieties, joys, and sorrows. They appreciate the importance of sexual attraction because they view it in the light of reason and religion, and so they do not allow themselves to be carried away by sensuality, any more than by vanity and self-interest, but their choice is made deliberately, with a pure intention and after mature pondering of motives. They do not give their hearts to the first comer whose appearance is pleasing, nor do they blindly adorn the object of their affections with every imaginable advantage, but they begin by comparing his moral goodness with the ideal they have formed of the partner with whom they would wish to pass the years

of this earthly pilgrimage so as to secure eternal life. After they are engaged they repress with abhorrence all impulses of which they would feel ashamed in the sight not only of God, but also of one another. Their one aim is to please each other by displaying those qualities of mind and heart which they perceive to be indispensable to a happy marriage.

Some young people rush into matrimony for sensual reasons only, and then, unless they are capable of another kind of love, their life together will be unbearable. Those, however, who have grown up in purity of heart and life will in their married state possess wisdom and strength to consecrate their bodily by means of their spiritual union. There are, and there ever will be, married couples who regard sexual love not as an aim in itself, but as a means to an end, and they purify it so that it is the basis of genuine, unselfish friendship. Where this is the case old age is powerless to destroy their love, and they will look back upon love's young dream as they do upon the games of childhood, and yet they are so firmly united that it is impossible for them even to imagine a separation in the other world.

We are told that the spiritual love between persons of different sexes is never free from some admixture of sex feeling; that a man who tries to find out the source of his love for a woman friend will discover it in virtues that are peculiarly feminine, and that a woman in her friendship for a man is attracted by the characteristic qualities of the male.

It is true that difference of sex affects intellectual life, and has very great influence upon the moral character of a person. We have often heard the perfectly true statement that men and women, although subject to identical laws of thought and action, involuntarily differ in their ideas, feelings, and aspirations, and that although the human spirit is sexless, it is not altogether unreasonable to speak of a male and female soul. This should be borne in mind by those who aim at placing women in positions that obviously require male incumbents. Each sex has its own mental peculiarities, corresponding to its natural objects, and the more definitely they are recognized by society, the greater is the latter's advance in civilization. A woman without womanly qualities, a man devoid of manliness are both equally forbidding, and only students of freaks and

malformations can care to have anything to do with them. That these mental and moral sex peculiarities imperceptibly influence even the purest friendships is a fact acknowledged even by those who despise all sensual delights. A woman pleases a man because she possesses the special virtues of which her warm heart, her ready susceptibility and sympathy render her capable; she is tender and gentle, affectionate and devoted, religious, sympathetic, self-sacrificing, and patient. A woman loves and respects in a man his mental ability, his strength of character, his energy, courage, and steadfastness, his honesty, tolerance, and self-restraint.

This difference in the mental and moral qualities of the two sexes plainly corresponds to the Creator's wise designs, and therefore serves a moral purpose. It is easy to see why human nature has been cleft in twain. The characteristics peculiar to each sex may either facilitate or impede moral perfection; they must be held in check so that they may not degenerate into eccentricities, and that peculiarities may not become harmful or offensive. An efficacious means of avoiding such excesses is for both man and woman to restrict themselves to the love of friendship. Just as a young man allows his hot-headed enthusiasm to be curbed by an old man's advice, and an old man derives fresh youth and vigor from association with the young, in the same way a woman should learn firmness, justice, generosity, and honesty from a man, whereas he should acquire from her gentleness, patience, and compassion. Both should be true to the natural characteristics of their sex, and avoid narrowness by being mutually the complement of the other. One very important object of the marriage bond is that the peculiarities on both sides be smoothed down, and mental and moral good qualities be exchanged. Thus marriage has a humanizing and mellowing effect, because it supplies husband and wife with daily opportunities of improving and perfecting one another. It is a truly moral and happy union only then, when husband and wife are united by the love of goodwill and of friendship, so that each bears with silent patience, and excuses and pardons, the natural peculiarities of the other. Marriage loses its moral character and its higher dignity if based on passion alone. Although the characteristics of sex affect not only the body but also the mind, it is possible for a perfectly pure

mental intercourse to exist between unmarried people, just as a perfect bond of friendship can exist between husband and wife. Such a bond of friendship is in fact indispensable to conjugal happiness, and is a necessary means of self-perfection. It protects and sanctifies married life and is itself sustained by that natural affection which among our novelists is alone known as true love.

To Materialists man's longing to meet his dead friends once again is an unsolved riddle. Carneri admits that it is "as natural as the heaving of the breast when the heart's beat is accelerated, and one who has never felt this longing has never really loved," but he also holds that its only satisfaction is the thought of the rest awaiting all men at death. Not everyone is bold enough to face the terrible consequences of this view of life. Buckle, who is not yet to be accounted out of date, in a critique on John Stuart Mill's book on *Liberty,* once wrote: "Of all the moral sentiments which adorn and elevate the human character, the instinct of affection is surely the most lovely, the most powerful and the most general. Unless, therefore, we are prepared to assert that this, the fairest and choicest of our possessions, is of so delusive and fraudulent a character that its dictates are not to be trusted, we can hardly avoid the conclusion that, inasmuch as they are the same in all ages, with all degrees of knowledge, and with all varieties of religion, they bear upon their surface the impress of truth, and are at once the conditions and consequence of our being" (H. T. Buckle, *Essays,* 1867, p. 121).

Have we, then, no right to believe that our love lasts beyond the grave, in spite of its outliving the purposes served by instinct, in spite of its ennobling emotions that originate in flesh and blood, and in spite of its forming a permanent and spiritual bond of friendship?

This is a very natural question, but we may go further and ask what Christianity has to say on the subject. If our love were to cease at death, we should have to endure the bitterness of disappointed hopes with Christian resignation. But we do not picture heaven as the abode of hermits living in seclusion; it does not exclude the joys of friendship and the delight of reunion. There would not, I think, be perfect happiness if each individual took what he could enjoy without thinking of others,

without wishing his companions to share his bliss and to join in his paean of exultant thanksgiving. The heroic mother of the Machabees was filled with the hope of reunion and bore most glorious testimony to her faith in it, when to her youngest son she said, "Receive death, that . . . I may receive thee again with thy brethren" (2 Mach. vii. 29). In heaven purely sensual love finds no place. The dross is purged out or transformed in the process of purification, as we know from our Lord's reply to the Sadducees' question (Matt. xxii. 23, etc.). Spiritual union will, however, continue in the other world. Contrasts due to sex will cease, because there will no longer be any need for one sex to supplement and counterbalance the other; yet the distinction of sex will continue and result in the purest and most delightful interchange of mental and spiritual advantages. We shall return in a subsequent chapter to the discussion of the nature of that love which lasts for ever.

CHAPTER VI

CONSCIOUSNESS AND MEMORY AFTER DEATH

> And all the other powers are silent quite,
> But memory, intelligence and will
> Are found in act with more than former might.
>
> DANTE, *Purgatory*, XXV, 83.

IN the preceding chapter we have listened to the cry of many peoples and to the cry of human nature. Christians are not more exempt than others are from the pangs of that love which craves to meet its beloved dead again. But any mutual recognition in the world to come is of necessity dependent upon the survival of memory, that is, upon our unimpaired recollection of the persons we have known and the experiences we have shared in common during our mortal life.

The first question, then, that calls for answer is this: Do the dead carry with them the memory of their earthly life and of the relations in which they have stood to others, especially to the members of their family and their friends? Have they any knowledge of other departed souls? Is there any certainty that our mental powers and activity continue after death?

All such questions are set aside contemptuously by Materialists, who say that thought is a secretion of the brain, as gall is of the liver. If the impressions left by what has been felt and experienced are merely matters of sense they must perish with the senses that cause and convey them, for a thing so absolutely bound up with the body can no more exist after the body has perished than the centre of a circle can remain after the circumference is destroyed. With death all remembrance ends, and all cognition ceases, for what we call the soul no longer exists.

The above is one of those unproved and unprovable assertions which Materialists are fond of making. To seek the soul with the aid of scalpel and balance and tables of constants is a method doomed to failure, since the soul, being spiritual, can-

not be discovered by such means. If all our powers and our whole being were limited to our bodies, the Materialists would be right, but as it is they move in a vicious circle, since they begin by assuming what ought first to be proved. They recognize only the negative aspect of death, the withdrawal from the body of its vital principle, but not the positive aspect, viz., the release of the soul from the body which imprisoned it.

No one denies that during life the soul in its intellectual activity is dependent upon the body. It was designed and created to be united with the body, to inhabit and inspire it, and consequently, when it acts, it has to rely on the body's co-operation. A child does not think because his brain has not yet received the necessary training, and as a rule an old man's intellect is less keen, because his brain is deteriorating. Injuries to the brain produce a paralysis of the mental faculties that is more or less permanent, according to the amount of harm done. Our ordinary ideas of disease must not, however, be simply applied to mental disorders, because it is, strictly speaking, impossible for the soul to be diseased. An entity which is simple and indivisible in itself cannot be affected by anything quite analogous to bodily disease. There is only one malady of the soul, and this is of a moral nature, viz., sin, which, according to the degree of its gravity, kills or weakens its supernatural life. Only the body is liable to disease and constant change, being formed of a combination of various elements; it can suffer from sickness, and does so more or less continually. Some persons are mentally infirm, feeble-minded, or actually insane, because their brain is diseased. Just as the keenest eye is blind without light, and the greatest artist can produce nothing but discords from a faulty instrument, so the soul cannot evoke reflection from a distraught brain. The brain is a necessary condition if the mind is to effect anything, but it is not the cause of its activity, any more than light is the cause of sight, and an instrument the cause of music. Darkness does not cause the eye to lose its sight, and even with an ill-tuned or ill-constructed instrument a musician retains his skill, and in the same way, quite apart from the condition of the bodily organs, the soul always retains its mental faculties and inherent knowledge.

There are, however, other objections, raised by another class of opponents, who fancy that at death the soul sinks into a

slumber, in which it remains until another body is at its disposal as the instrument of renovated activity. Just as the eye cannot see without light, and the musician cannot play when his violin is broken, so, they contend, is the soul incapable of activity without the aid of the senses. The Nestorians often allude in their writings to a sleep of the soul, which begins at death and will continue until the last day. Among the forty propositions of Rosmini, condemned in 1887, the twenty-third lays down the principle that the soul, after its departure from the body, loses all self-consciousness, and sinks into perpetual sleep, or into a state of absolute darkness. This assertion rests upon the presumption that the laws governing a soul residing in a body hold good after its release from the body, but in truth those who speak of the soul's sleep ought first of all to prove the principle upon which their inference is based. To declare stoutly that the soul, when the tie which unites it to a body is broken, must live on according to the laws of its earthly existence, and therefore must continue to display vegetative and animal activity, leads to the astounding conclusion that immortality must be postulated for the vital principle of plants and animals. Of course during this life the light of the intellect burns at the expense of the brain and its faculties. "As the flame of a candle is fed by the wax, so does the flame of consciousness live on the faculties of the brain." The latter flame goes out if it is left burning too long, and if intervals of sleep and rest do not pour, as it were, fresh oil upon the brain, which serves as the wick of the lamp. The soul must have material wings in order to soar aloft into the realm of thought.

On the other hand a disembodied soul needs not the co-operation of the body, and is able to act as a pure spirit in accomplishing the tasks peculiar to its spiritual nature. The life of the spirit consists of knowing and willing; if, as it quits the body, the soul were deprived of this twofold activity, its continued existence would seem highly improbable, for a spirit, unable to perform its natural functions, is aimless, and its continued existence is without any *raison d' être*. Therefore the animal soul perishes because it possesses only vegetative and sensitive powers, and cannot use them after death; but a human soul lives on, because its functions are also spiritual. When a painting is finished, the brushes, palettes, and paints may be

destroyed, but the picture remains; when a book is printed, the manuscript may be burnt, and no harm is done. When the thought is complete, the soul may dispense with the helper that has assisted in its production. The thought itself remains, being incorporated with the *ego* as its inalienable possession. "I believe," says Leibnitz, "that everything that has once occurred to our souls, remains their property for ever, although they may never think of it again. Who can remember everything? But since nothing in nature is done in vain, nothing is lost, and everything is working towards perfection and maturity, in a similar way every image reflected upon our souls will ultimately form one consecutive whole with things still future, so that we shall see all as in a mirror, and be able to select what seems most suited to the requirement of the hour."

The next life, we must remember, is not simply a new life, but it is the continuation of our present existence. Death is a chasm between this life and the next, but it is bridged by continued consciousness. A godless man may desire to escape the voice of conscience by a leap into the unknown, but a just man has no desire to drink of the water of Lethe and thereby lose his memory and his own identity. What value has further life for *you,* if you can no longer think of yourself as the same being as now? If you become something different, your present self surely need not care what it is. How can you rejoice in the reward of your good works, if you are not in a position to know that you personally performed them? How can conscience torment a transgressor, who has ceased to feel himself responsible and deserving of punishment? The future life is the completion, as well as the requital of life here, and the ever-present remembrance of the good or evil accomplished in this world will constitute unspeakable happiness or sorrow. The ungodly "shall come with fear at the thought of their sins; and their iniquities shall stand against them to convict them" (Wisd. iv. 20). "Remember," said Abraham to Dives, "that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime and Lazarus evil things." The soul of the other Lazarus, who was awakened from death, which probably never appeared before God's judgment-seat after leaving the body on that occasion, was probably unconscious during the time of separation.

Just as total inactivity on the part of the soul after death

would amount to the death of that soul, so the loss of consciousness would be equivalent to the destruction of individuality and the abolition of all rewards and punishments. If God permitted the total extinction of memory, He would deprive Himself of the natural and necessary means of revealing His impartiality in the distribution of pleasure and pain.

Our knowledge of the circumstances and activities of the other world, not being derived through the senses, cannot, of course, be the result of observation or research; it is arrived at rather by rational inference and faith. Yet we may assert that there are a number of psychological facts quite incompatible with the idea that all mental activity and especially all remembrance of one's past life must end when the body dies. We all know by experience that we can penetrate into the world of thought most easily by forgetting our connection with the body, and by shutting our eyes to outward things, in order to fix them entirely on what is interior. The most vigorous and fruitful activity of mind of which we are capable is developed when we delve into the innermost recesses of our own nature to escape distraction by the things of sense. In his *Phaedo,* Plato represents Socrates as saying: "If we wish to know anything clearly, we must cut ourselves off from the body, and with our mind contemplate directly things as they are. I fancy that our desire will be satisfied, and that truth and perfect wisdom, the objects of our affections, will be given us only after death, and not in this life."

The dying Cyrus said to his sons: "I at least have never been able to convince myself that the soul, at its departure from the unconscious body, will lose all consciousness, and I think that it becomes pure and spotless, attaining to full consciousness only after it is released from all intercourse with the body" (Xen. *Cyrop.* viii. 7). Even from our dreams we can gain some idea of the abundant knowledge of which the soul is capable when freed from the bondage of the flesh. Plato and his followers, however, undervalue the earthly life of the soul when they assume that her first fully conscious awakening and development will take place only after death. In any case it is impossible to speak of the fulness of knowledge in the other world without including in it the remembrance of life in this world with its events and circumstances.

In spite of the continual changes to which the brain is subject, the same as other organs, the impressions resulting from our past experience and perceptions do not disappear. For instance, we remember little things that happened in our childhood, and they retain their freshness even in old age, and are then often a source of comfort. To an old man they afford some compensation for present distress, and when he recalls the pleasures of youth he seems to live once more in the past, and his mind and heart grow young again. Often the mental faculties, especially the memory, fail in old age, so that Newton and Kant at the last could not understand their own works, and aged scholars often seem at sea in what were once their favorite subjects of study. But, on the other hand, many a grey head shelters a mind of unusual penetration and keen memory, and occasionally, as many ancient philosophers, e.g., Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Plutarch, and Cicero, asserted, the soul displays amazing vigor and clearness of vision even at the moment of death. Shortly before his death Plato wrote the *Timaeus* and the *Laws,* two very profound dialogues; in extreme old age Sophocles compiled his masterpiece, the *Oedipus Coloneus;* Leibniz continued his work to the very close of his days; Goethe gave evidence of mental freshness in old age when he wrote the Second Part of *Faust;* Talleyrand, a few weeks before his death, at the age of eighty-three, delivered one of his best speeches in the Academy; Alexander von Humboldt never to the last ceased to add to his reputation for learning; Döllinger displayed his mental faculties and persistency to the end, and a number of politicians — Metternich, Palmerston, Derby, Guizot, Thiers, etc., and Popes, such as Pius IX and Leo XIII — proved that the mind need not age and decay with the body.

Jean Paul remarked that a chronicle of the dying would form a huge epitome of the world's history, but that we shall never read its pages here on earth. He meant that in the close proximity of death the soul often receives an abnormal intuition and revelation of divine things. Not long before he breathed his last, Möhler, the erudite author of *Symbolism,* beheld a wonderful vision, and exclaimed: "Now I have seen it, now I know it; now I could write a book and such a book it would be! but now it is too late." Alexander von Humboldt speaks of the

mysterious clearness of mind displayed by Grand Duke Karl Augustus on his death-bed. Goethe says: "At the end of life a composed mind perceives things never thought of before; they resemble happy spirits, settling down on the pinnacles of the past." Lauvergne, a French physician, writes: "I have known people to whom the hour of death brought a divine illumination of things previously obscure. They saw the solution of problems over which they had puzzled in vain for years." There is the strange phenomenon of a short, lucid interval just before death after years of insanity, and the original intellect briefly flashes up out of the darkness of a benighted mind. Instances of this phenomenon are recited by Schubert, Burdach, Maudley, etc. Cervantes must have had this fact in mind when representing Don Quixote as recovering his senses just before death. Fechner accounts for this phenomenon by suggesting that the mental malady is due to diseased portions of the brain interfering with the action of healthy portions; and that, as death approaches, the diseased parts are destroyed or rendered inactive earlier than the healthy parts. To illustrate this, we see that if one of a pair of horses harnessed to a vehicle goes lame, it makes also the other horse unable to proceed, but if the lame one be taken out, the other horse will be able to do its work. Finally we hear of cases in which uneducated people and children discoursed, shortly before death, with such clearness of judgment and such remarkable eloquence even upon abstruse topics, that they seemed to have become learned theologians and philosophers. "There is no more convincing apology for Christianity than a true Christian's deathbed."

A wonderful intensification of the memory was experienced by Admiral Beaufort in 1825, when in danger of death. In a letter to Hyde Wollaston he says that he fell overboard and was nearly drowned. At first he felt violent fear and alarm, but these were followed by a sense of calm. The progressing suffocation rendered him completely numb and unable to move, but his mind was intensely active, and he rapidly surveyed his whole life, not in vague outlines, but like a picture on which the most insignificant occurrences appeared as present or as only just past. Thought followed thought with indescribable rapidity, and his whole life with all its events, both great and

small, even those long forgotten, was reviewed in hardly two minutes.

No thought of the future presented itself, only the past appeared before him. His state of mind upon recovering consciousness after his rescue the Admiral describes as follows: "A crushing anxiety, a sense of continuous oppression seemed to weigh me down; one sole idea occupied my mind, viz. the thought that I had narrowly escaped drowning, but there was no trace left of the multitude of clear and definite ideas that had so recently passed through my memory." It often happens that dying persons clearly recall their whole life with all its moral qualities, and remember faults that had long vanished from their memory.

At the same time, as already remarked, it is not the rule that the darkness of death is illumined by sudden flashes of intellectual activity; more often a cloud seems to settle down upon the dying and they pass away in unconsciousness. Sometimes, however, the spirit once more asserts its supremacy even in this last stage, and, like the sun, settling amidst clouds, it sends forth one last ray of light, as a sign that its apparent departure from this world heralds its rising in a new place.

This intensification of the mental powers at the hour of death has analogies in the phenomena of dreams, and especially in unusual conditions of sleep, that is to say in those manifestations of the soul's life where the activity of the brain is either interrupted or greatly diminished. In sleep, which is aptly called the brother of death, conscious activity ceases, as a rule, and in its place imagination reigns supreme, collecting and uniting the pictures stored up in the memory in such strange ways as to produce most grotesque caricatures. The most trifling processes and changes in the inner organs, as well as the gentlest stimulus from without, give rise to odd hallucinations; flies assume the proportions of elephants, and the imagination groups the monsters thus created in the most arbitrary and extraordinary variety of ways. The soul does not altogether rest during sleep, and is by no means inactive, though the body resembles an inanimate organism, or an instrument laid aside for a time. Silently though busily the soul works in the vegetative life, as it were in a workshop, hidden from consciousness. It replenishes the spring of life, collects and orders the faculties, and repairs

injuries. It is a well-known fact that sound sleep is refreshing to everyone, and an important aid in the recovery of the sick, and thus the soul reveals its power over the body.

Some philosophers hold that just as light is always luminous, and fire always heats, so the soul always thinks, and therefore even during sound sleep an unbroken series of thoughts is passing through the mind, but that they follow one another in such rapid succession that no impression is left when the sleeper awakens. There is evidence to show that the mind is not absent during sleep, for it is ready to respond to outward stimuli, and to turn them into sensations and ideas. It faithfully executes a resolution to arouse the body at a definite hour and to return to its day's work. We know that before making a decision in an important affair it is well "to sleep over it." Serious problems have often been solved by somnambulists and dreamers, and it is no rare thing for the artistic genius to remain active whilst the body sleeps, and to evolve ideas that in the light of day mature into the choicest works of art. Famous artists, such as Leonardo da Vinci, acknowledge that their noblest conceptions have often been due to inspirations received at night, and that the fairest offspring of their talent was born whilst they slept.

In dreams the soul plays with the ideas and experiences accumulated during the day, and causes the impressions to revive on a kaleidoscopic background; impressions, too, that have long passed out of our conscious memory return, and prove that they did not vanish into oblivion, but have been stored up safely in some secret chamber of the mind. Sometimes not only is there the evocation of what is old, but the birth of what is new, and then the mind enlarges its knowledge by starting with the known, and, proceeding to build upon it, creates new images. Hence there are warnings and forebodings for which we can account by their connection with memories of the past or vivid impressions of the present. Dreams, no doubt, are unsubstantial shadows in so far as they are not subject to the control of calm reflection, but the extraordinary rapidity with which the mind traverses time and space, uniting in one picture ideas wide as the poles asunder, and presenting them to us thus combined, is very strong evidence of the existence of forces (nowadays vaguely described as the functions of the "subliminal conscious-

ness") over which the mind, in our normal waking state, exercises very little control.

We know that already Cicero and Valerius Maximus gave accounts of dreams foreshadowing the future. Many, but not all, of them can be interpreted as symbolized presentments of obscure perceptions and ideas accumulated in the dreaming mind. It is a poor expedient to say that it is simply a matter of chance whether things seen in a dream coincide afterwards with fact. Christopher von Schmid, a favorite writer for the young, says that in 1784, when he was a student at Dillingen, he dreamt that in one of the gloomiest streets of his native town he met a friend, who greeted him with the news that his father was ill. He woke up, but fell asleep again, and saw two priests in black gowns going into his father's house. Again he woke, and again he slept, and this time he saw a coffin carried out of the house, and heard mournful music. A few days later a professor sent for him to tell him that his father had died suddenly.

A partial intensification of mental powers takes place in those abnormal conditions of sleep which are accompanied by clairvoyance, although this occurs also during consciousness. Somnambulism has a variety of stages, beginning with deep sleep and passing through a stage of apparent perception and wakefulness to a state of trance. Visions of the past or future, rare in normal conditions of sleeping or waking, are quite common here, and the evidence in support of them, gleaned from every century, is so overwhelming, and the number of witnesses of high scientific and moral standing is so imposing, that people nowadays are ceasing to doubt and deny the occurrence of such phenomena, and are beginning to observe and treat them with a more open mind. Psychology has derived much assistance from physiology in union with psychophysics, but still no satisfactory explanation can be given of most of these strange phenomena.

It is unscientific to ascribe them to mere coincidence, as is sometimes done as a last resource. Philosophers with a tendency to mysticism, or rather to fantastic ideas, speak of magical forces, and of the distinction in man between the common and the magic *ego*. If this means merely the difference between conscious and unconscious mental activity, and the possi-

bility of greatly intensifying both, then this theory becomes a makeshift, which adorns the unexplored faculties of human nature with the pleasing name of "magical forces." If, however, it claims to be a new discovery, showing man to be capable of working miracles, it is opposed to the principles of genuine psychology and to all sound conceptions of the supernatural.

We think it unwarrantable and unscientific to refer all remarkable mental phenomena without exception to mysterious relations with the natural or spiritual world, because many, if not most, of them are too insignificant and unimportant in their moral character to justify us in supposing them to be produced by extramundane interference. It seems preferable to regard the states and phenomena under discussion as abnormally intensified manifestations of natural powers of the mind.

If the processes of which we have been speaking show that a lowered brain activity can coincide with a heightened mental life, our conviction that the soul can be active after the death of the brain gains a confirmation that may almost be called scientific, because it is acquired experimentally. If the soul, whilst intimately connected with the body, has power to exercise its highest functions independently of its most natural and necessary organs, it will, when separated from the body, be able to dispense completely with the assistance of the senses.

What, then, can justify Spinoza, Hegel, and Schopenhauer in saying that at death all remembrance of our previous life is lost? Kant gave it as his opinion that if we could suddenly recall all that is stored up in the background of our consciousness, we should fancy ourselves a species of deity. We should certainly be astonished, as much as pleased, at the unsuspected and suddenly revealed wealth within us. As a matter of fact we are never in a position to give a full account of our mental possessions; sometimes we feel sure that we know a certain fact, but we cannot think of it, and we must wait until the requisite stimulus forces our consciousness to bring to the surface what was stored away in some secret recess of the mind.

We are far from thinking, as some philosophers do, that the central point of the soul's life is to be sought on its midnight side, that its life culminates in the phenomena which occur during the unusual conditions of sleeping and dreaming. Indeed,

we regard these conditions as morbid, because in them the harmony between the powers of the soul is disturbed, so that one is augmented whilst another is weakened; and also because the soul in such states of partial exaltation by no means always attains to a happy enlightenment, but is often suddenly bewildered and makes extraordinary blunders. Great caution should therefore be used in interpreting flashes of light in these dark processes as really presaging our future state or as a lifting of the veil which hides from us the supernatural.

It is obvious that all activity dependent upon the organs of the body, and restricted to the perception of sensible objects, must end at death; but the soul's ability to resume such activity, as soon as she regains opportunity to use the necessary sense instruments, does not end. Nor do those activities cease which are of a spiritual nature, accomplished in and by the soul. To this class belong our higher perception and endeavor. — Let us discuss the former first.

There must be a twofold distinction between earthly and spiritual knowledge; they differ in kind and also in extent.

Although even in our present state our higher faculty of perception, or reason, does not act through a bodily organ, it is nevertheless still dependent upon the body and its senses; since it cannot directly communicate with the essence of the objects of knowledge it must have a notion, derived through the senses, before it can proceed to any act of cognition. The object that we see with our eyes and perceive with our mind is not consumed by either our eyes or our mind. The eyes are susceptible to the vibrations of the light rays that proceed from the object, and receive as it were a picture of it, which produces on the brain an impression upon which the mind lays hold, so that ultimately an idea or mental picture is formed, and in this it recognizes the object perceived by means of the senses. As soon, however, as the soul passes into the rank of pure spirits, it can dispense with such pictures derived through the senses, and uses its power of knowing after the fashion of pure spirits; for the manner of knowing depends upon the manner of being. The soul as long as united with the body naturally wants the co-operation of the inner and outer senses, and it is equally natural for a soul released from the body to be capable of direct spiritual cognition. Supernatural cognition is not dependent

upon sense perception nor upon laborious study and research; it is direct and intuitive.

The spirit, therefore, no longer needs painfully to collect the materials for concepts or judgments, nor to distinguish their characteristics and parts, but with a single glance surveys the object of cognition in all its aspects and relations. The knowledge that we shall possess in the other world is as much higher than that possessed here as the eagle in its soaring flight rises above the insect that painfully crawls upon the soil of the earth.

It is obvious that an increase in clearness and extent must belong to this new kind of knowledge. The soul appears, even during our earthly existence, to be capable of exalted enlightenment, but, as it is fettered by the senses, this faculty displays itself only rarely and for short periods, and then at the cost of other powers. How clear and penetrating will be the vision of the soul when it reaches the luminous heights of the other world! Distance will then cease to be a hindrance to knowledge.

Even before our bodily eyes are closed for the last time, those of the spirit will have opened, and, being wholly free and independent of the body, they will behold things and persons both far and near. By direct intuition the soul knows itself, its nature and abilities, its intellectual and moral qualities, and its relation to God and to all creation, as well as other spirits, both those which are pure by nature and the souls of the departed. It knows bodily things through spiritual pictures which it does not have to detach from sense impressions, for it is incapable of these, and it receives its conceptions through the action of a new light. This light, not to be confounded with the light of glory, corresponds with the natural needs and claims of the soul, which even when apart from the body desires to increase its store of knowledge by natural means. Without such spiritual pictures, a natural knowledge of things and processes perceptible to the senses would either be limited to the remembrance of previous experience, or be absolutely impossible, as in the case of those who died in infancy. Hence the light necessary to the natural use of the innate power of cognition is infused by God even into the souls of the reprobate, since it has nothing to do with retribution. It is a mistake to assume, as Delff does, that only a good Christian retains his personality after death, whilst all others sink into a sleep where their dreams constitute their

retribution; those of the wicked being disturbed, those of the good pleasant and tranquil. Dreams are not life in its fullness. Many people nowadays even go so far as to assert that sinners are totally annihilated.

St. Thomas is at pains to show that in the natural order bodily life is nothing but a benefit to the soul of man, and therefore he declares that the knowledge which comes to it whilst separated from the body is only vague and general. The soul hence has perfect cognition only of the things and events of nature, as well as of individual human beings and their destiny; it beholds most clearly those with whom it is most closely connected, either by acquaintance or inclination, by natural disposition, or by the special ordinance of God. The place where it lived, the persons with whom it associated, the things that it used, the affairs in which it was interested, — all these it sees without interruption and more clearly than persons and things less closely connected with it.

The union of soul and body is a necessary characteristic and essential privilege of human nature, which, as such, is destroyed as soon as they are separated. The union is not in all respects an advantage to the soul, but only inasmuch as it is designed and created to inhabit a body. A pure spirit, lacking a body, is higher than one that resides in a body, for it is complete in itself, and not dependent in its knowledge and volition upon the co-operation of the senses, but achieves the same ends by simpler means. "For the corruptible body is a load upon the soul, and the earthly habitation presseth down the mind that museth upon many things" (Wisd. ix. 15). Hence Suarez and other theologians maintain that the human soul, when apart from the body and independent of the senses, is in a more perfect condition and possesses greater knowledge. In its higher activities it is hindered by the body as at present constituted, but it will be assisted and not hindered by the glorified body.

No one can state with certainty what will be the limits of that knowledge, which, as we have seen, is a natural dowry of the soul after death; we cannot tell how far it will know persons and things, circumstances and events on earth.

We are uncertain as to the course and extent of our earthly cognition, and we have no standard by which to measure super-

natural cognition, even apart from its higher character. As we are ignorant of the laws governing the incorporeal human spirit, we must content ourselves with drawing conclusions from its nature, disposition, needs, and desires.

We all wish to know whether the departed have any knowledge regarding those whom they leave behind; can they through their own natural cognition learn anything of the fate of their friends on earth? We cannot doubt that every soul thinks of those still living, because it clearly remembers its past life; and the parable of Dives and Lazarus justifies the inference that the soul perceives what happens on earth. Dives was anxious about his brothers, and this anxiety was based upon his belief that they were still in the same precarious state as they were in at the time of his death. We do not know what has become of our departed friends, but yet we pray for them, and so likewise the departed may continually sympathize with us without knowing precisely what our circumstances are.

St. Augustine denies to all the dead without exception any *natural* knowledge of the events of this world, but adds that this is only his personal opinion and not a binding decision. As the principal reason for this view he states that his devoted mother, St. Monica, who had never forsaken him in this life, had never once returned to comfort him after her death. He does not, however, deny all apparitions of spirits; in fact he relates some such occurrences, and acknowledges humbly that he cannot account for them. He can only suppose that they take place at God's command, in accordance with the ordinances of His mercy and justice, without even the knowledge of those sent to appear; just as sometimes persons still alive see us in dreams, although we are unaware of the fact. Although what goes on in this world is at the time of its occurrence hidden from the inhabitants of the next, the holy Doctor thinks that they may receive tidings of all that it is expedient for them to know, perhaps through new arrivals, through their guardian angels, or from God Himself.

St. Thomas Aquinas agrees with St. Augustine in the view that in virtue of their *natural* cognition the dead cannot know what goes on in this world, and therefore are dependent upon special revelations from God, and communications received through angels and souls of persons recently dead. He quotes

in support of his theory a passage from the Book of Job (xiv. 21), "Whether his children come to honor or dishonor (after his death) he shall not know," i.e., unless he receive information from some other source. The context, however, shows that the passage admits of another interpretation, viz., that to the departed earthly events are indifferent and worthy of attention only in their relation to salvation, and that consequently, to the saved, the knowledge of what happens here causes no pain. We need not hesitate, therefore, to adopt the contrary opinion, viz., that the soul, whilst separated from the body, can obtain news of earthly events, both through its natural faculty of cognition and through its own observation. Recently it has been suggested that if it is to increase its knowledge, a mode of perception, unintelligible to us, must be within its reach. If, as St. Thomas thinks, it is able to see the present world in detail, as well as in general, it is difficult to understand why the more interesting sphere of phenomena perceptible to the senses, viz., the results of its actions, as well as the struggles, triumphs, and defeats of others should be hidden from its gaze. To follow the course of history and the life of their kinsmen cannot be contrary to the wishes of the departed, since they are undoubtedly interested in this world and in all that takes place here. Moreover, the good feel well-earned happiness in watching the seed ripen that they have sown, whilst the sight of their failures or of the misfortunes of their friends cannot cause them pain. The wicked, too, receive a just punishment for their evil deeds when they see them continually producing further evil, and so increasing their own penalties, whilst finally, whether they will or not, they are forced to contribute to the ultimate victory of righteousness.

If the departed could not know how those fare whom they have left behind, the reason for their ignorance would not necessarily lie in their changed form of existence, but in the will of God. But why should not God allow them to know our circumstances, since their remembrance of us is constant?

What kind of memory do the departed possess? Here below we have difficulty in remembering what has occurred, we remember it imperfectly, or perhaps not at all. These imperfections are due to the fact that, like perception in general, all recognition is obtained through sense impressions. These im-

pressions reside in the brain and perish with it, but such is not the case with thoughts, which are spiritual pictures. The soul is capable of forgetting only whilst it needs pictures derived through the senses, though even this is not real oblivion, but only a withdrawal of knowledge into the background, because either the inward sense or the outward stimulus is too weak to renew vividly the previous impressions.

We read of dying persons who, when at the point of death, extend their mental horizon so as to look forward with prophetic insight to the future and at the same time to survey their past life, and recall all that they had seemed to have completely forgotten. When the soul has reached the other world its consciousness suddenly becomes aware of the hitherto unknown and unsuspected wealth of its faculties, and it now clearly perceives without effort things past and present, many of which had already been forgotten, whilst others had come to its knowledge in gradual succession and through laborious exertions. The separation from the body has upon the spirit an effect that tends to preserve, not to distract nor to destroy; it imparts such vigor that the spirit becomes clearly conscious of itself and all its faculties. In comparison with this consciousness, that which we now possess is like twilight compared with the brilliancy of the noon sun.

If death is rightly called a sleep, the state after death is an awakening. The mind is clearest when it awakens from profound slumber, and the deepest of all sleep is that of death, which is followed by an awakening so wonderful that the soul beholds at once and as directly present all that it has learnt and experienced during its time of preparation on earth. It has no need to exert itself, nor to receive any stimulus from without. During the life of the body the spirit is, as it were, a stranger in its own house, slowly and painfully seeking its way by the clue of thought, and forgetful of the treasures that lie in darkness, outside the bright track of momentary distinctness. As death approaches, light begins to dawn in the depths of the mind, and, as Fechner says, the central point of the inner man will burn like a sun, lighting up all that is spiritual in him, and at the same time penetrating everything with a supernatural clearness of vision. All that has been forgotten here will be remembered there.

A departed spirit does not therefore lose all memory of its past life, with its various events whether great or small. This memory is held fast by the higher force of remembrance, and can be renewed at any time and far more perfectly than is possible under our present circumstances. Like recognition, so will memory be of a different kind than in this world, for it is then independent of the senses and purely spiritual. The word memory is a term hardly adequate to describe the intense vividness with which all that has ever been experienced returns to the mind. There everything is at once subjective, whilst here we must exert ourselves to make it so; there the soul need but look within, in order immediately to bring all her collective knowledge clearly before her consciousness.

CHAPTER VII

THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE BLESSED

AS soon as the spirit has laid aside the trappings of the body its sight becomes clear and free, as we have seen, and the consciousness of its past life is immediate and complete. Hitherto we have been speaking only of that intensification and expansion of knowledge which is the necessary consequence of the spirit's new condition. In the case of all the dead this is extramundane, but in the case of the saved alone is it heavenly, by which we mean that it is not merely beyond the reach of sense, but wholly apart from, and transcending, nature.

Hence those philosophers are mistaken who look for nothing in the other life beyond a natural growth of the seeds sown here below, and of the innate faculties of the soul. On its purely natural side the soul's state in the other world of course involves such a growth, but from the point of view of grace and glory it involves infinitely more. Undoubtedly the heavenly life stands in close and necessary connection with our life, but differs from it in kind as well as in degree.

If the new light that God refuses to no departed human soul renders that soul capable of perfect knowledge, with what abundant truth and clearness will the light of heaven flood the soul of the just! Illumined and strengthened by this wonderful transfiguration, it will behold the uncreated infinite Spirit face to face, as He is, in His incomprehensible beauty, majesty, and bliss.

All knowledge of God here below, including that possessed by the greatest theologians, is inadequate and obscure. It is not immediate or intuitive, nor does it grasp God in His being, but only in His works. He is present always and everywhere, we feel that He is near, and hear His voice, but we see Him not. In Him we live and move and are; He dwells among us and in us, but hides His face from us. We see Him in a pic-

ture and yet we possess no clear likeness of Him. The expression Beatific Vision or "contemplation of God" is figurative, and we use it in trying to give an idea of that which we cannot imagine; it is something far beyond mere sight, for it is not the action of the bodily eye (which even in its glorified state is incapable of this contemplation), but it is the work of the soul, which directly perceives the supreme object of its cognition, through being most intimately connected with Him. A soul in bliss is illuminated by the radiance of the everlasting Sun, and steeped in the fathomless ocean of divine light, and thus it receives a knowledge of God that can never be blurred or spoilt.

Our eyes now behold the sun in the brightness of his own light, but when they are raised to him at midday, they are dazzled and his very splendor prevents them from seeing him, and forces them to close. The everlasting Sun will not indeed cause pain to the eyes of the soul, for they are endowed with supernatural sight, and are thus rendered strong enough to endure the immediate presence of His light. "In Thy light we shall see light," i.e., that Being who is all radiance and splendor.

All things have their beginning in God; from all eternity the plan for our creation and redemption, the world's history, and the last judgment have been clear to His infinite intelligence. When the blessed gaze into the abyss of His Being, they perceive in Him, more or less clearly according to the degree of their susceptibility to the influence of His eternal light, the whole spiritual and material world, with the conditions and peculiarities of its existence, the reason and course of its development and modifications, God's great deeds, the wonders of nature and grace, and the history of nations and of individuals. They see all this more clearly than they might perhaps see the design for a masterpiece in the mind of its artist. God's eye is as it were the mirror reflecting the universe, without being completely filled with it; in this mirror the blessed behold all the existence, life, and activity of created beings; all becomes clear and manifest to them.

The soul in contemplating God perceives all the arrangements designed from the beginning for its special good, and brought to bear upon it at the right moment; it comprehends the mystery of its election to grace and glory, and the steep

and difficult path of final perseverance. It realizes how its merciful Father in heaven has always loved and cherished it as the apple of His eye, watching over it and guiding it until darkness gave place to light, and pain to perfect happiness; it knows how its Redeemer sought it, cleansed it with His Blood, and nourished and strengthened it; it knows that the Holy Ghost has united it to Himself and chosen to work the wonders of His grace upon it; it feels that Our Lady, standing in agony at the foot of the Cross, took it to be her child, and has ever played the part of a true mother, procuring graces for it; it realizes how its guardian angel has instructed, admonished, and warned it, how it has saved it from danger, protected it in temptations, and accompanied it on its way through life; it knows that the saints in heaven and the holy souls in Purgatory have prayed for it, and how Holy Church on earth has fought and suffered on its behalf.

How wonderful will be this knowledge! In comparison with it, what is Solomon's wisdom that astounded the Queen of Sheba? What is even St. Paul's, that amazed the wise men of his time?

The happiness of the individual will be increased a thousandfold by the sight of those who share it, especially if they have been known, respected, and loved by him during life. He has found them again in the boundless ocean of light and joy, a higher life of spiritual intercourse is beginning, in which there will be no need of speech as a means of communication, nor of the eye as a means of recognition, but as within us one thought comprehends and influences another, without the intervention of ear, mouth, and hand, so will spirits be able intimately, familiarly, and directly to communicate one with another (Fechner). They behold and remember one another, and converse together. There for the first time we shall really know each other; for there will be no more concealments and misunderstandings. On earth no one is fully known by his fellows, not even by his nearest and dearest, but in heaven, in the presence of the God of truth, dwell none except children of the truth; at the first sight each will be recognized and all will know what manner of man he is, his name and position, his actions and merits. St. Paul's words will then be most fully realized, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Thus

we can solve the difficulty that seems insuperable to many who deny personal immortality, for they assert that perfect knowledge through the contemplation of God must remove all distinctions of personal thought or of persons in thought, since all will possess one and the same truth. But the personal difference between those who contemplate an object is not removed by the fact that they are all contemplating the same truth. There are different degrees of blissful contemplation assigned to each as a reward for his life on earth, which differs in the case of each individual. Therefore their mutual recognition does not disturb the blessed in their contemplation of God, any more than the sight of a glowing piece of iron in the furnace can prevent our bodily eyes from seeing the fire in which it is imbedded.

How joyful will be the meeting of husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, friends and acquaintances! Let the reader picture for himself the delight of recalling victoriously encountered dangers, temptations, and struggles, the hardships and labor that we have endured in common, the services that we have rendered, the prayers that we have offered for each other. St. Francis of Sales exclaims: "O God! what consolation we shall enjoy in those heavenly conversations with one another! What unimaginable happiness we shall experience when our good angels tell us how anxiously they have cared for our salvation during our earthly life; when they remind us of the holy thoughts with which they inspired us; and when we understand how they awakened within us a craving for God's grace, in the possession of which we now rejoice! They will ask us whether we remember the thoughts that they awakened in our hearts on reading such and such a book, or on looking on such and such a picture, — thoughts that finally led to our conversion."

In the years between 1860 and 1870 no religious subject was more frequently discussed in Paris than the question of recognition in heaven. Miss Grace Ramsay (Kathleen O'Meara) visited Paris in 1868 and was received by the Archbishop, Mgr. Darboy, who fell a victim to the Commune on May 24, 1871. Miss Ramsay has left an account of her interview with this heroic prince of the Church, whose decision she sought on this particular question. He raised himself from his armchair, lifted

his hand, and with a radiant glance and ringing voice replied: "In truth, we shall not only recognize one another, but we shall know each other far better than is possible on earth. We shall read in one another's heart all that we have hitherto kept concealed, for there will be no more secrets in heaven. What sweet and wonderful revelations await us! We shall discover countless ways in which we have helped souls to heaven, although no one has noticed them on earth. We shall see many faults that we were on the point of committing, and from which we nevertheless refrained, many good works from which we shrank in fear, and nevertheless performed, because some soul that loved us prayed and suffered on our behalf. We did perhaps some little service to a friend in need, or gave alms to the poor, and in return they interceded for us. We may not have heard or heeded their blessings, but they flew to heaven and accomplished great things for us. Only when we come thither shall we see how great was the force of the blessing and what supernatural good it did us, and we shall be filled with amazement! Our meetings in heaven will be incomparably more filled with rapture than any on earth, even than that between a mother and a long lost child. Friendships will be formed that death can never tear asunder, and bonds of undying affection will exist between the saviours and the saved." Those who sowed together in tears shall come with joyfulness, "carrying their sheaves"; those who have labored, fought, and triumphed together will now receive their reward and the victor's crown. With exultant thankfulness they will sing together: "We have rejoiced and are delighted all our days; we have rejoiced for the days in which Thou hast humbled us, for the years in which we have seen evils" (Ps. lxxxix. 14). During our intercourse on earth much was dark, obscure and enigmatical, now everything is clear and bright.

It is indeed a strange and unknown country which the soul enters on leaving the body, but at once it is enlightened regarding it, and is welcomed by a host of friends. If it is permitted to pass into the hall where the marriage feast is held, all whose names are written in the book of life become its friends, and the bonds of former friendships are riveted for ever. With jubilant exultation it is received by that great multitude that no man can number, and set in the place assigned

to it before the throne of God, wearing the crown prepared especially for it. The soul, being thus perfected, enters into the joy of its Lord, and joins in the alleluia of those risen from the dead, in Our Lady's Magnificat, in the Sanctus of the blessed angels and in the great final Amen of all the elect. "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come" (Apoc. iv. 8). "Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb" (ibid. vii. 10). "Benediction and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving, honor and power and strength to our God for ever and ever, Amen" (v. 12). These songs of praise in honor of Him who is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, are ever new, as is the abundant gratitude of which they are the expression. The sight of a spirit in bliss is very keen but will it, we may ask, still be able to endure the dimness and gloom of this world? Holy Scripture tells us that "They shall be inebriated with the plenty of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of thy pleasure" (Ps. xxxv. 9). Will not all the knowledge that a soul brings with it from this world fade away as the starlight fades at sunrise?

Forgetfulness of earthly things cannot tend to the soul's happiness unless the intensification of its faculty of cognition to the point of the loss of memory indicates progress. Is it to appear before God bringing nothing with it, like a slate from which all writing is obliterated? Is it to lose hold of a memory that connects it with its life on earth, and renounce the joy of a continued personal existence?

"Does heaven harden the souls that it receives, or rob them of memory and compassion? By no means, my brethren; heaven expands and does not narrow our hearts; it makes love more, not less, extensive. In God's light the memory grows clear, not dim, and in this light we learn what we did not previously know, but we do not forget what we learnt before" (St. Bernard).

It is true that in comparison with the wealth of fresh knowledge and insight, corresponding to the state of bliss, it would seem no great loss to be deprived of the knowledge and experience of this life. Yet no one perhaps would suffer that loss willingly. Can we give up the fairest and best remembrances of our earthly existence? When we die, are we to forget for

ever all our relatives, friends, and benefactors, to whom we owe so much that we feel bound to pay them undying gratitude? When we go forth into eternity, are we to leave behind us everything that would recall our beloved dead to our minds, and bury all memory of them in Lethe? Can God possibly allow us to forget all that He has done for us through the agency of those whom He appointed to guard and guide us on our way? Shall we meet them as strangers, instead of recognizing them as friends? No, surely not. Our hope of reunion cannot be an illusion which a sorrowing heart constrains the reason to accept; nor is it a mere feeling that makes its way from our emotions into our consciousness, imperceptibly assuming the stamp of truth, — no, it is absolute certainty, beyond the reach of doubt.

Let no one say that the details of life are too inconsiderable to deserve remembrance in heaven. These insignificant trifles have been the means of gaining heaven, and, unless they were remembered, it would be impossible to enjoy fully the reward for loyalty to God, preserved and practised in both great and little things. Nothing is trifling in the sight of God and the blessed; nothing is insignificant, though it may appear so to our superficial thought. Higher knowledge will perceive even the most unimportant things and events to be hieroglyphics traced by divine Providence, and to decipher these, interwoven as they are with our earthly life, will be one of the most delightful occupations of a soul in glory, which has carried with it to the other world all the facts learnt and the experiences accumulated on earth. When St. Paul says that knowledge passeth away, he is referring to our imperfect knowledge of God, which will, like faith, come to an end. "When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. We see now through a glass in a dark manner, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know, even as I am known" (by God). We shall retain in our memory the religious ideas, opinions, and expectations which we received through revelation and increased by study and meditation. Only the pictures produced by sense perception, which are the raw material for the higher cognition of the spirit, will perish; all that reason claims as her exclusive possession, viz., spiritual knowledge, learning, and wisdom, will be retained permanently

by the soul. "Wisdom is glorious and never fadeth away," and therefore St. Jerome urges us to take pains to acquire it here below. From the point of view of eternal happiness it matters little whether we have stored up more or less learning here on earth; in any case the degree of heavenly knowledge, of which St. Paul speaks, does not depend upon the standards of this world. In any poor idiot there are hidden talents that will be developed and matured only in the other life.

But is it conceivable that a soul, overpowered by the magnificence of the uncreated majesty of God, can still feel the need or the desire of perceiving anything apart from Him? Absorbed in the contemplation of His eternal beauty, that continually reveals fresh wonders, must it not be indifferent to all around it? Can it interrupt its glorious contemplation and turn its gaze away from God to creatures? Such an act would be a painful interruption in its happiness, and we can hardly understand how any one could seriously think of such a thing. It has occasionally happened to inspired persons, that they were, so to say, carried to the threshold of heaven, and allowed to enjoy a foretaste of the bliss of contemplation. Their souls have exulted, as did those of the apostles on Thabor, but their senses were dead for this world, and they had power to perceive and feel nothing but the supernatural and divine. On returning to the level of everyday things, they felt at first unhappy, because their contemplation had brought such happiness that it was difficult to express in words that which they had seen. If, then, a faint foreshadowing of glory can carry the soul away and destroy its susceptibility for all the impressions of sense, must not the actual contemplation of God, face to face, engage the soul's faculties so exclusively that it becomes unable to think of anything else? — The answer to this question is that grace and glory do not destroy nature, and that the natural faculties of the soul are increased and not diminished by the light of glory. Hence the divine Saviour in His earthly life, though ever engaged in the contemplation of God, was not hindered from caring for His followers and attending to His earthly business. All that can interest the blessed is worthy of their notice, for every good desire is most perfectly fulfilled in heaven. Plato longed for the sight of uncreated truth and beauty in order to behold therein all that

is true and beautiful. The just who are made perfect see in the abyss of God's Being the secrets of grace, of nature and of glory, all, in short, that can be the object of knowledge. When they wish to look at creatures, they need not turn their eyes away from God, or interrupt their enjoyment of perfect happiness.

> O Grace abounding, which to me did lend
> Courage to look upon that Light eterne,
> Yea, all my power of sight thereon to spend!
> In its abysmal depths mine eye did learn,
> Bound in one volume with the Love divine,
> The law on which the universe doth turn.
>
> DANTE, *Paradise*, XXXIII, 85, trans. Longfellow.

Further, as we shall see later on, both nature and revelation show us heaven not as a place where souls pass one another with cold indifference, and are satisfied to seek their individual happiness in solitude. No, the blessed form one united society, the members of which live for one another, love one another, and rejoice together. Such life is impossible without mutual recognition, without an interchange of emotions of the present and memories of the past. Therefore our faith in recognition in the light of eternity does not simply satisfy a craving of sorrowing hearts, but is supported by the sound arguments of reason illumined by faith.

Having thus demonstrated that the contemplation of God does not prevent the blessed spirits from the perception of the universal creation, and that the memory of the past is not obliterated, we can go on to discuss another question to which reference was made at the conclusion of the preceding chapter, viz., Do the blessed by means of their own perception know anything of their survivors?

There cannot be much doubt as to the answer, for we have already seen that to all the departed without distinction we may ascribe a certain degree of self-acquired knowledge of what goes on in this world. When we come to speak of the knowledge possessed by the *blessed*, we have St. Thomas on our side. He follows St. Gregory in thinking that by a peculiar privilege the blessed know what happens on earth. Their knowledge, he says, resembles that of the angels, for those who are perfect have entered the realm of everlasting light. Illumined and strengthened by the abundant light of glory, they

gaze into the mysterious depths of divine knowledge, and perceive the course and alternations of epochs, the quiet and the stormy periods of history, and the marvellous web of divine Providence, interwoven with the voluntary actions of men, all that goes on in the world, the struggles and sorrows of the Church and the fortunes of their brethren who are following the road they once trod. Of course the knowledge possessed by the blessed is not omniscience; only to God is the horizon of eternity without limits, not to any created beings. But, on the other hand, neither their knowledge nor their state of being is limited by conditions of space or time. In proportion as the Most High raises a soul to Himself, so does its sight grow keener, and so is it more completely penetrated by divine light. Even a lost soul possesses, to its sorrow, the natural gift of far-sightedness; it was from afar that Dives beheld Lazarus in Abraham's bosom.

The blessed will naturally fix their eyes chiefly on those persons and places that were for natural or supernatural reasons most familiar to them on earth. All that concerned them or affected them in any way will continue to be for them an object of interest.

Just as a retrospect into the past is not incompatible with the joy of the Beatific Vision, so is it with the observation of what is happening now, or will happen in the future. In all temporal affairs the blessed detect their relation to God, whereas our eyes, still dim in the darkness of earth, are apt to perceive this relation either last in order, or, in many cases, not at all.

As the denizens of heaven regard the things of earth in a different light than do we, the shortsighted dwellers in this world, and as they are secure from any possible feeling of pain, it follows that their knowledge of what goes on here below must contribute to increase their happiness. Parents in glory may see their children in poverty and want, a husband may know that his wife is in sorrow and distress, a friend may perceive that his friend is in despair, and yet they are not distressed, but rejoice, because in the light of heaven they behold the wise and loving designs of Providence, and know that God leads His chosen children along the Way of the Cross, to secure their salvation. Finally, the just, who have attained perfection, concur so completely with the ordinances of God's justice that they

abhor all evil even in those nearest and dearest to them, and continue to pray for them only so long as, in God's decree, the time of grace continues; and, when that time is over, they extol His justice in punishing the wicked as heartily as they previously praised His love and mercy in pardoning them.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CONTINUANCE OF LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP IN THE OTHER LIFE

CAN we be absolutely certain that the bond of love, which survivors on their part preserve unbroken, will be as loyally maintained by the departed? Is it true that they not merely think of us, but remember us with affection, so that they unite the loving sympathy, for which we long, with their memory and knowledge of us? If this be so, then only the corporal and visible bond between us is broken, whilst the union of hearts continues, proof against separation, against death and all limitations of time and space. Then, too, there must be many in the great realm of spirits who look forward with joy to the time of our arrival in their midst.

We regard our dead as members of our family or community, closely connected with all that concerns us, and their lasting union with us not as dead or external, but living and intimate, as among the members of one body, so that our joys and sorrows still affect them. "All ready now are we to do thy will, that in us joy thou gain" were the words addressed to Dante by the blessed in heaven (Paradise viii. 32). To the soul, a breath from God's mouth, and at once the handiwork and likeness of that Being who is all love, it is not only an innate need, but a duty to love. The Second Commandment of our holy religion, and the token whereby we are known as Christ's disciples, is that we must love one another. God's most implacable enemies are characterized by the want of love; St. Catharine of Genoa described the devil as saying, "I am he who loveth not." If, then, in this world those who truly love God are not only permitted, but strictly commanded, to love their neighbors, why should it be otherwise in the world to come?

Surely those who have safely reached the haven of everlast-

ing peace cannot forget their friends still in danger on the deep; those who have returned home from exile cannot forget those still in banishment; those who have escaped from prison cannot forget the captives still languishing in misery, and the children rejoicing in the safety of their father's house cannot forget their brothers and sisters who are still in bondage abroad. Genuine love by no means grows inactive when it is relieved from all anxiety as to its own salvation, and free to devote its energies to the help of others.

What our reason assumes and our natural feelings desire to be true, is raised by faith to perfect certainty. The Church insists upon the dogma of the Communion of Saints, and reveals to us the mystical body, of which Christ is the head, of which each Christian is a member, and of which love is the life. This Christian love, in which every other kind of pure love receives its sanctification, is not merely quiescent in its perfect and glorified state above, but is displayed in activity and in help given to others. Therefore we look up to the saints in glory as to zealous and faithful advocates, pleading our cause at the throne of God, and desiring earnestly that we may join them in their heavenly home. Association in heaven must be the crown of the bond of love uniting Christians on earth, and what Christ is preparing through the agency of His Church here below, He will bring to perfection in the glory above.

Christianity is essentially the religion of unity and love, the most perfect realization of social coherence. After the world had been purified by the deluge, men again forsook God, and ceased to be one people and to speak one language. Their mutual hostility caused the curse of Babel to be pronounced, and their rebellion against God led to idolatry, and thus the bonds uniting mankind were broken. Christianity restored man's fallen nature and effected a twofold reconciliation, viz., between God and men, and between men with one another. The Church is not simply instituted for our salvation; she is the living community of all who are united to God and to one another in love. The confusion of languages at Babel caused men to drift apart, but the aim of the miracle at Pentecost was to bring them together again. Love and unity are the keynote of our Lord's prayers and discourses, and of His apostles'

letters and instructions. "I pray . . . that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in me, and I in Thee" (John xvii. 21);—these were our Saviour's words. St. Paul, speaking of the renewal of mankind, according to the image of Christ, says that "there is neither Gentile nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all and in all" (Col. iii. 11). St. Luke records that "the multitude of the believers had but one heart and one soul . . . all things were common unto them" (Acts iv. 32). Their harmony and brotherly love were to the pagan world their most prominent characteristic. The more the part of his nature truly akin to God develops in man, the less is he isolated in the selfishness of the old Adam; his heart opens to the divine influence of Christianity, and is filled with love of all who are illumined with the same light of faith and of grace.

If, therefore, the communion of the saints in heaven is the perfection of their union here, love binds them together, and all the temporal differences, due to sin, cease to form a barrier between them. Where Christ is all in all, there, also, those who are with Him, and behold His glory, are one with each other. Men were at first united; their separation came later. In heaven, when sin and its consequences are destroyed, union will be restored and Babel will be ended. Brotherly love and concord will characterize the great organism, the foundation of which was laid on earth when it was united with Christ, its Head. All who, after the sleep of death, awaken as living members of His Body, will be thenceforth united for ever to Him; those who have put off the old Adam are for ever children of the new Adam, and become brethren, for they resemble "the first-born among many brethren," and bear in their heart and on their brow the spotless image of their divine Model, the Man Christ Jesus, who has saved and sanctified them. Heaven is the perfection and glorification of the Church on earth, but the love which is essential to the heavenly life cannot even after the resurrection be identical with that which originated in flesh and blood, or in earthly interests. Hence a Christian must not look forward to an unchanged continuance of love such as he knows here, and he should be on his guard against falling into the errors of the Jews and Mahometans, who simply transfer the circumstances of this life to

the next, or look upon life in heaven as a development of life on earth, proceeding in accordance with purely natural laws and on similar lines. This view is taken by many who adhere to the principle of evolution.

The idea of a complete and final severance from all connection with this world is unendurable to a Christian. Penetrated with the charity of the gospel, he trusts that the religion of love will not require of him such a sacrifice. Even if he were mistaken in this consoling belief, there could scarcely be a more beautiful, more excusable, and less dangerous error.

"Nature herself," says Cardinal Wiseman, "seems to revolt at the idea that the chain of attachment, which binds us together in life, can be rudely snapped in sunder by the hand of death, conquered and deprived of its sting since the victory of the cross" (*Lectures on the Catholic Church,* xi. p. 67, 1851).

We who believe in Him who rose from the dead, and Who will hereafter raise us to new life, cannot dread death's victorious power, or look upon it as really destructive of life. We do not anticipate an absolutely fresh existence so much as a higher development and an essentially more exalted form of our life on earth. We shall be in body and soul the same people, still human, in spite of our being raised to an existence resembling that of the angels.

Around Christ, their Head and Centre, gathers the throng of the saved, whose life goes on in accordance with the laws governing their glorified condition. Will there be any place in heaven for the relations and ties which seem as beneficial as indispensable to our hearts here? As Christians we hope that it is so, and we do not fear that this belief will drag us down to a lower degree of religious development, at which the joys of heaven are seen to consist chiefly in the reunion with those whom we have loved on earth. Starting from the unassailable principle that, just as grace has her counterpart in nature, so nature has her completion in grace, we look forward to the continuance of all connections and relations that are not destroyed or forbidden by grace, but rather ennobled; since all that served as a preparation must necessarily partake in the completion. The relation between closely connected persons was formed primarily for their lifetime on earth, but that temporal relation has everlasting results, and the bonds of

love are not severed by death. A soul that loves God cannot leave behind in this world the love with which it has loved its brethren in God; no, this love will be intensified and purified before His throne.

The heart does not demand merely the continuance of love, but the continuance of that special love which results from temporal union. How is it possible for the dead to remember their relatives and friends and yet to lose all particular affection for them? Are those who have pledged themselves to lifelong, or to everlasting, love to be false to their vows as soon as they attain perfection? Are those who lived together as friends on earth to meet as strangers in heaven?

The earthly bond that was worthy of grace will be worthy also of glory; so why should it not be the same with the particular affection, which, with the force of natural necessity and sacred duty, draws each man into a more or less wide circle of his fellow men? Is the strong bond that unites us in families not formed by God's Hand, strengthened by His commandment and consecrated by His grace? Can the love sanctified by the Sacrament of Matrimony be unworthy of permanence? Must parents be unable to add in the next world to the blessing which the Fourth Commandment promises to dutiful children?

We may hold, then, that everything good and noble in nature that is recognized, confirmed, and ratified by grace will last for ever, and will not pass away. Nature is the necessary prelude not only to grace here, but to glory hereafter. The Fathers and Doctors of the Church say that nature is the foundation, grace, and completion of the edifice; nature is the wild plant, grace is the graft of God on it. The joint product of both is at once natural and supernatural; first the sap, then the blossoms of virtue that beautify life on earth, then the fruit of salvation is formed, and at the hour of death it ripens and is gathered into the barns of heaven. Neither the wild plant alone, nor the graft alone, but the whole tree with all its fruit is transplanted from earth to paradise; and in the same way temporal love becomes eternal in the perfect love of God.

"See, therefore, that you erect no insuperable barrier between heaven and earth, between the blessed and those who have loved them. If you raise any such barrier, you are betraying reason into that false belief that nature is destroyed,

not perfected, and that the prayers which we, in our sorrow and hope, offer to the saints are lost in the void of heaven" (Méric). "No, the heart's memory does not perish there, and remembrance of earth never dies away. True friendship, sanctified by supernatural love, will last on uninterruptedly. The father will glory in his son, the mother will find her children again, and, provided that she has trained them for heaven, will love them for all eternity" (Ratisbonne).

St. Bernard, after losing his dearly loved brother Gerhard, gave full way to sorrow, yet he was not slow to find the proper answer to his plaint: "Why had we to part, when we loved each other so dearly? It was indeed hard, but only for me, not for thee; since thou, my brother, hast found in other and still dearer companions compensation for the loss of thy dear ones here; but alas! what remains for me, bereft of thee, my only comfort? What excessive joy and happiness are thine, even without me, my brother? Instead of my poor company thou delightest in the presence of Christ, thy God, and, joining with the choirs of angels, thou feelest no pain at having lost me. The Lord of Glory gives Himself to thee in fullest measure, and that is the best compensation for my absence; but what will be compensation to me for losing thee? . . . I would fain know thy feelings. I am wellnigh crushed under the burden of my many cares and troubles, being thus deprived of support in my weakness. For my peace of mind I would fain learn whether in the glory of heaven and the ocean of eternal bliss any thought of those left behind finds place in thy heart. Perchance thou knowest no more thy brother according to the flesh, but, being wholly immersed in God's light and love, thou livest for God alone, and carest not for me. For whosoever is there united with God, is one with Him, one in His will and desires, one in all the feelings of His heart; inspired by His spirit, and having neither perception nor taste for anything but God. Yet God is love, and the more closely a man is united with Him, the more heat and light does he receive from the fire of divine love; God is free from passion, but full of mercy; to show mercy and to forgive is His delight and prerogative. Therefore it is fitting that thou, resting in bliss on the bosom of our merciful God, shouldst thyself be merciful, though thou art not unhappy, and compassionate though thou

sufferest no pain. No! thy love for me is not dead, but transfigured. Thou hast put on God, without putting off the thought of me, for God, too, is interested in us; thou hast laid aside all weakness, but not thy loving, brotherly care for me, and love never faileth. I am sure therefore that thou bearest me continually in thy memory and thy heart. I seem to hear my brother's voice whispering in my ear: 'Can a mother forget her own child? Even though she may forget, yet will I not forget thee, my brother'" (Bern. *In Cantica, Sermo* 26).

Paulsen and other modern teachers of ethics, misunderstanding our Lord's words, assume that a perfect Christian is required to sever all natural bonds, and Lecky tries to support this misinterpretation by instances taken from the lives of the saints. None can deny that St. Bernard was a true follower of Christ, yet we have just seen how confident he was that his brother Gerhard would retain in heaven his full fraternal affection. And why should he doubt it? Even the unhappy Dives still cared for his surviving brethren, and appealed to Abraham on their behalf. The contrary opinion, that denies the continuance in the other life of any love for those on earth, can surely not be offered only for the reason that it is a gloomy view, nor can the fact that it affords no consolation be accepted as proof that it is more correct. What does Holy Scripture say on the subject? — Martha, mourning over her brother Lazarus, refused to be comforted when our Lord told her that he would rise again. She seems to have understood these words as conveying a promise of reunion at the general resurrection. "I know," she said, "that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Nevertheless she continued her lamentation; the resurrection seemed so far off, and she desired to have her brother with her at once.

The Sadducees, who denied the resurrection, found an excuse for their unbelief in the inconveniences that would arise in the other life from the Mosaic Law regarding the levirate marriage. Their ideas of life were so materialistic that they either could not, or would not, attach any meaning to the expectations of orthodox Jews, except the one which implied the continuation of sexual intercourse. There might be a case, they said, in which seven brothers in succession married the same woman; at the resurrection therefore whose wife would

she be? Jesus answered: "You err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they shall neither marry nor be married, but shall be as the angels of God in heaven" (Matth. xxii. 30). If the spiritual and moral relations of married people ended, like their married relations, at death, our Lord could have solved the problem by saying that in the next world they would be as completely strangers as if they had never lived together. But instead of this, He referred to the power of God, whereby bodies are glorified and freed from all that is sensual. He denied the continuance of their sexual, but not of their moral, union. The angels do not marry, and when the human race has reached its allotted limits, it will be released from both the command and the instinct to propagate the species. No more new families will be founded, but all men will form one vast family under Christ, its Head, and the members of this family will be inseparably united by the bond of love. "We are sure," says Tertullian, "that we belong to those with whom we rise again, to give an account of one another. Although a restoration of the marriage bond will not take place, we shall belong to one another all the more closely, because we arise to a better life and to a spiritual union, and will recognize both ourselves and our own."

We have already seen what St. Bernard says, and he does not stand alone. His convictions are shared by the other Doctors of the Church. We should weary our readers if we would here quote the agreeing opinions of them all and prefer to reserve some of them for later use in consoling individual mourners. A few general remarks on these opinions will suffice here.

The Fathers, being enlightened by God, not only understood the language of a sorrowful heart, but spoke it themselves. They were far from imposing silence upon natural lament, and they gave it utterance in harmony with the expressive and soothing music used in the liturgy. They would have none of that so-called "unfeeling sanctimony," which assumes that unions contracted before God, and sanctified by Him, have no validity in the world to come. On the contrary, the Fathers valued nature as the necessary foundation of the edifice which is completed by grace and glory, and which, without such a foundation, would have nothing to rest on. With St. Paul

they censured those only who mourned like those having no hope. That those who mourned their dead might be soothed, they suffered them to weep freely, and were indulgent to those who had a claim to such relief. Their voices full of love and sympathy are still heard out of the distant past, and they have lost none of their power to give courage and consolation.

The early Fathers offered comfort in very much the same way as St. Francis of Sales did many centuries later. In writing to a grief-stricken friend he says: "When you think of those persons who are dearest to you, and from whom you feel you could not endure to be separated, consider them precisely as those with whom you will be eternally united in heaven; for instance your husband, your father, your little son. Say to yourself: 'This dear boy will surely some day, if God so will, be happy in the eternal light; he will, I hope, rejoice in my happiness, as I shall rejoice in his, without ever being separated from him.' But it will be just the same with your husband, your father, and all the rest."

The Church in her prayers and ritual shows us that she not merely tolerates, but explicitly sanctions the hope entertained by the faithful of a future joyful reunion.

She bids mourners pray for the grace of meeting their friends again, and the sentiment of particular affection cannot be separated from this happiness. She follows the example of her divine Founder, who, being the Author and Essence of love, and knowing all the needs of man, on the last evening of His life offered to His disciples the same sort of consolation which we crave for when we must part from our dear ones. Not satisfied with leaving Himself to them in the most holy Sacrament of the Altar, as a remembrance and pledge of His love, He showed at the moment of leave-taking, which filled Him with unspeakable sadness, such tender consideration for them that, in addition to the higher reasons for consolation, He emphasized those also which touch men's hearts most readily. What caused the apostles and disciples the keenest sorrow was the thought that now their intercourse with their beloved Master was over, no longer would they see His face and hear His voice. "Only a little while," He told them, "and you shall see me again," once more to enjoy all the happiness that His visible presence had given them.

Following this example, the Church, in most of her prayers for the dead, explicitly alludes to the consoling thought of a joyful reunion with the just who have gone before. How earnest and confident are the petitions for parents such as, "Grant, O Lord, that I may see them again in the bliss of eternal glory!" "Unite me with them in the happiness of the saints." "We beseech Thee, O Lord, that Thy grace may grant me with them an everlasting crown."

The selection of certain saints as patrons of persons, churches, societies, towns, and countries, and the invocation of certain saints against particular maladies, proceed from the consideration that the saints in heaven have a peculiar interest in the places where they lived, in the state of life in which they worked out their own salvation, and in the people whose circumstances resemble those that were once their own. Consequently a sort of what may be called a purified *amor patriae* is not deemed unworthy of the saints. How great, then, would be our confidence in invoking our departed friends were we certain of their admittance to the communion of the saints! Those who in life never wearied of caring for and helping us, could indeed be relied upon to be our zealous advocates and loving guardians! Schelling, far from relegating this consoling thought to the sphere of superstition, writes: "Is it not natural that those who first brought the light of faith to these forests, who planted these hills with vines and these valleys with corn, thus becoming the pioneers of civilized life in regions previously wild and almost inaccessible, — is it not natural, I repeat, that they should take a permanent interest in the lands they brought under cultivation, in the nations they united in one faith? Can our forefathers in heaven forget their children on earth? Are not these men indeed our spiritual forefathers? I at least am touched at the sight of a nation turning to its patron saint for help and consolation in times of dire distress."

If we review our preceding arguments, we feel sure that the hopes and longings of those crushed by the burden of sorrow are based upon a firm foundation, and are not merely imaginary. Every true union of hearts is permanent, and will gain, not lose, in intensity in the Land of Love.

There is much consolation here, both for those on the eve of departure and for those who are left behind. A dying Christian

feels sure of being able to remain in close and tender relation with the friends whom he is leaving, and so he bids them farewell with calm assurance. Theodore Studites, a Byzantine Abbot, who won great fame in the discussion regarding the use of images, and died in exile on Chalcis on Nov. 11, 826, said, when taking leave of his sorrowful brethren: "Before God, who is Truth, I promise you, that when I come to enjoy the Beatific Vision, I shall not cease to pray for you all to my Lord and God, that it may be well with you, that you may be happy and endowed with heavenly benefits; and there I shall await each one of you, and when you depart from this world, I shall come to meet you, recognize, welcome and embrace you."

That the sympathy of the blessed for their survivors on earth endeavors to be active cannot be doubted. In a vision the high-priest Onias showed Judas Machabeus a man whom he described thus: "This is a lover of his brethren and of the people of Israel; this is he that prayeth much for the people and for all the holy city, Jeremias, the prophet of God" (2 Machabees xv. 14).

We may, however, ask further whether the blessed only pray for us, or whether they can actually intervene for our good and help us in the circumstances of daily life, assuming, of course, that they act under the orders or with the consent of God. An affirmative answer to the latter alternative would find a joyful echo in the hearts of all bereaved mourners, and there is much to be said in support of it. The universality of belief in some living and actively real bond between the departed and those whom they have quitted is undeniably a fact, and this does not seem merely an idle chance and a thing devoid of significance. What conclusions may be deduced from it? If we strip off the accretions due to superstition, there still remains the comforting conviction that the dead, since they have not ceased to live, continue also to live for their survivors. J. H. Fichte believes that "the souls of the departed are the instruments whereby Providence, which penetrates the whole universe with its wisdom, is able to reach and satisfy the needs of individuals." In my opinion we may accept this idea without any fear lest the direct character of God's dealings with men should be imperilled, and without incurring any risk of animistic extravagances.

Of the angels St. Paul says that they "are sent to minister

for them who shall receive the inheritance of salvation" (Heb. i. 14). The blessed, who are like the angels, are also, it appears, able to minister to mankind, and, from one point of view, are better qualified to do so than pure spirits. As they still stand in their previous alliance with men on earth, their relation to the latter must be closer and more intimate than that which can exist between angels and men. They have finished their course on earth and begun a fresh life in heaven, but there is nothing impossible or unreasonable in assuming that they, having lost neither the memory nor the love of their fellow men, and being able continually to behold the lot of struggling humanity, may at least invisibly approach them again and remain near them. We picture the world of spirits as far remote from our own, but this is no obstacle to their intercourse with us, as the contrast between this life and the next is less a matter of distance and space than of condition. Hence it is contrary neither to the nature nor to the new conditions of departed souls, if they associate invisibly with the living, and render them services.

There are those, indeed, who would ascribe to invisible spirits an unlimited influence upon earthly affairs. Fechner, for instance, asserts that the existence and activity of these spirits are normally so closely interwoven with our life in this world and the laws governing it, that under ordinary circumstances it never occurs to us to give thought to the intervention of a world of spirits from the life beyond.

Those who claim that the living and the dead can mutually and compellingly affect one another, delight in the words that Shakespeare has placed on the lips of Hamlet, who declares that "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy." Among these things may be reckoned the intervention of spirits. Schelling goes so far as to say that we should often feel astonishment could we perceive that what we took for causes were merely means and conditions, and that, when we least suspected it, spirits were busied about us, and that our happiness or misfortune depended upon our choice of one or the other. Against this view it must be said that, if the living and the dead could mutually influence each other, as Fechner supposes, the peace of the departed would be disturbed, and the free-will and responsibility of the living would be diminished. Since exact science ends where the spirit-world begins,

it is an unscientific and superstitious proceeding to substitute the action of spirits for that of secondary causes, and to assume a direct influence on the part of the dead whenever anything unusual or inexplicable takes place. Moreover we know nothing whatever as to the mode of this interference, and so we deceive ourselves if we fancy that we have discovered a satisfactory explanation of the mysteries of the natural and spiritual life by simply ascribing them to such invisible agencies.

Another question, especially in our times, frequently asked, is whether the departed can communicate in visible form with the living, or announce their presence by any phenomena perceptible to the senses of sight, hearing, and touch.

We cannot here enter upon a full discussion of this topic, obscured as it is with a confused mass of deception, fraud, and superstition, and what we had to say on the subject of Spiritism is found briefly stated on page 137. However, while we loathe the idea of systematic commerce with the dead through the agency of professional mediums, and detest materializations and all the other mummeries of modern spiritists, believing all these things to be foolish and mischievous nonsense, still it should be remembered that sane thinkers in every century have admitted apparitions of the dead as at least possible. No one at least can prove them impossible, for no one can determine the laws and limitations assigned to the activity of a free spirit. The spirit world would indeed be in poor condition if its powers could be completely fathomed by our shallow comprehension. Schopenhauer is probably correct when he says: "The *a priori* rejection of the possibility of a real apparition of the dead can be based only upon the conviction that man is absolutely annihilated at death. So long as this conviction is absent, we cannot see why a being, which by hypothesis still exists in some way or other, should not be able to manifest itself and affect another being, even though differently conditioned. . . . If there is in man an indestructible element besides matter, it is at least not certain *a priori* that what produced the wonderful phenomenon of life, should after death be absolutely incapable of affecting the living. The matter can only be settled *a posteriori*, i.e. by experience." Schopenhauer's testimony is of importance in so far as spiritual manifestations constitute an indirect protest against his philosophical

system. As to the question of facts, in spite of the great number of occurrences reported from every century and authenticated by trustworthy witnesses, and although many great men have believed in the reality of apparitions of the dead, we must ascribe the great majority of these alleged occurrences to conscious or unconscious deception, and especially to hallucination. Kant confesses that between the assertions of rational and positive eyewitnesses, and his interior insuperable doubt, he is completely at a loss, and hence he decides that, owing to his ignorance of the next world, he will not venture to deny absolutely that there may be some truth in the stories about spirits, and strangely resolves to doubt them singly, whilst to some extent believing in them collectively.

Whenever a fact occurs that is claimed to be of extramundane or supernatural origin, it is not only the more prudent course, but a moral and religious duty, to show scepticism and great reserve, as an absolutely necessary safeguard against that excessive credulity and superstition so commonly met with.

CHAPTER IX

THE GLORIFICATION OF LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP

THE bonds of noble love and friendship that have been formed on earth are not severed by death, but are drawn even closer in heaven. We must now see of what kind each particular affection ought to be, in order to be reconcilable with the most perfect charity towards God and man.

Revelation gives us no definite information on this point, and gives no answer to the many questions which a pardonable curiosity suggests. This silence does not, however, allow us to let our imagination run riot, nor permit it to measure exalted truths by the standards of earth, and to fill our general and somewhat vague ideas of heavenly union, friendship, and love with all manner of charming pictures.

As we cannot actually behold these things, must we be contented to say, "We shall live, meet again, and love one another, though not in the same way as here; we simply do not know how"? In that case a survey of the other life would not be justified. There would be no standard by which to judge of it, and ideas of time and space are to our understanding indispensable, as also a basis for a comparison with the state of affairs prevailing on earth. Vague ideas, without any definite instruction, are of small avail to soothe the pain of loss; it is not satisfied with mere generalities.

With regard to the joy of meeting again in heaven we may express such thoughts, ideas, and suppositions as can be brought into harmony with the glorified state and the higher aims of the other life, according to our faith and the nature of our subject. We may also follow the example of Holy Scripture and quote the allusions in it to the next world, in order the better to comprehend types, similes, and expressions derived from our earthly connections and customs. Here below we see the other life only in a mirror, and describe it only in figures, yet, as Holy

Scripture tells us, what is figurative is not untrue, provided that proper spiritual interpretation is not neglected.

We must avoid two dangers; we must not lay so much stress on the spiritual element as to represent heaven peopled by cold, unreal shades, nor must we depict its inhabitants as creatures of flesh and blood. There is no risk of our saying too much about its joys and consolations; however much we may say, we shall still fall far short of the truth. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard" is an unchallengeable principle which must guide us in all our speculations.

Let us, therefore, continue to speak the language of the heart, being careful that it shall be the genuine expression of well-grounded ideas. Of course our imagination co-operates when we mentally contemplate the depths of eternal bliss, but it is held in check by reason directed by faith, so that it may not sway to and fro, and may turn away from pictures that sorrow may suggest — pictures which might, indeed, please the heart and the eye, but which are merely imaginary, devoid of truth, and therefore devoid of all value.

In order to preclude all misunderstanding, I wish once more to state emphatically that though the joy at meeting again is very great, it is by no means the greatest of the joys of heaven. It belongs to the increase and perfection, but not to the essence of the heavenly beatitude, which consists essentially in the undisturbed contemplation, the permanent possession, and the everlasting enjoyment of God, our supreme Good, in our blissful love and delight in Him. The human intellect, being able to know and love the Infinite God, is completely filled and satisfied with Him, as St. Augustine says, "Thou hast made us, O God, for Thyself, and our hearts are restless, until they rest in Thee." The soul resting on the bosom of the most holy Trinity is incomparably happier than an infant on its mother's breast. God Himself, who is a boundless ocean of light, life, and love, is to the "elect a reward exceeding great"; "they shall be His people, and God Himself with them shall be their God." They are His property and He is their inheritance; this is the climax and crown of the joys of heaven. There is neither hunger nor thirst; all hopes and desires are satisfied; the soul in glory possesses God, and in Him possesses all things.

It is precisely because God is all in all to the blessed in

heaven that He so perfectly satisfies all their needs and the cravings which He Himself has implanted in them, either by nature or by grace. The soul that is saved seeks and finds everything in God, and seeks nothing beyond Him, for it can desire only what is God's and what is in harmony with His will, and it enjoys created things only with reference to Him and for His sake.

To the blessed God is the one supreme Good, but as He is also the Author of all goodness, He gives Himself to His elect as the source to them of all imaginable and desirable benefits, and He bestows Himself upon them with His Being and Essence in a peculiar manner. Through, with, and in God they possess and enjoy whatever they are capable of possessing and enjoying, as we read in the Book of Wisdom, "All good things came to me together with her, and innumerable riches through her hands . . . for she is an infinite treasure to men" (Wisd. vii. 11, 14).

In his *Prologium* (c. 22) St. Anselm gives an excellent description of the wealth of good things included in the highest Good. The following thoughts are taken from this work.

"The most powerful impulse of the human heart is the craving for happiness. The spirit strives to know the truth and to acquire knowledge and wisdom, and is plunged in the fullness of divine light; it feels itself created for virtue, and is for ever confirmed in sanctity; it desires supremacy over its own body, and will rule over it for ever; it pines for rest, and will indeed rest in everlasting peace; it craves spiritual delights and bodily health, and will enjoy what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard. It loves honor and esteem and power, and will participate in God's majesty and splendor. Finally, it seeks intercourse with the good and wise, and will associate with all the righteous, since these are united with God. It loves its own friends even beyond the grave, and it will find them again and never lose them, if they are in God's presence."

Here we have the fundamental thought that will guide us aright in our further effort to explore supernatural spheres. In its light the various kinds of heavenly love will unite in perfect harmony in one mighty fire of love — and at once the difficulties will disappear that would proceed from an interference of a love of creatures with the love of God.

It would seem that the soul, penetrated by the fire of perfect love of God, would be able to love nothing beyond God; that her love for everything else must vanish like a spark. The stars grow dim when the sun rises in the firmament, and it would be an insult to that glorious orb to ask for candlelight at midday. How, then, can a soul that enjoys unspeakable happiness in the possession of the highest good still hanker for other good things, which, in comparison with the one supreme Good, are as drops in the ocean, or grains of sand in the desert? Can a heart, filled with rapture because it beats in and for God, still care for creatures?

The answer, however, is not difficult. If all the ardor with which angels and saints collectively love God were gathered up into an ocean of love, this would be but a spark in comparison with God's love for Himself. But even this love, with which God seeks and rests in Himself, does not hinder Him from loving His creatures infinitely, nor does the unspeakable happiness which He has in Himself, and which neither needs nor is capable of intrinsic increase, hinder Him from delighting in the possession of His creatures. If, then, the infinite love, which God owes and renders to Himself, is compatible with His love of creatures, why should not a similar love be compatible with the love felt by the blessed for God, since their love, even when most ardent, is only a faint reflection of God's love for Himself?

It has already been pointed out that the soul takes all its natural faculties with it into eternity. Now it is indispensable to the completion and perfect happiness of human nature, that its talents and capabilities should attain to undisturbed, harmonious activity, and consequently that all desires should be satisfied. Forces and inclinations that serve exclusively temporal objects will vanish for ever; but charity, the mighty queen of the inner life, will remain, though absolutely subject to the unchanging law of God. This law is: Thou shalt love nothing without reference to God, and everything shall be loved in Him and for His sake. This is the rule governing the act of loving in heaven. Consequently neither in this connection, nor in speaking of the veneration of the saints, is it becoming to call God jealous.

Who would dare to think of the inhabitants of heaven as a

society devoid of mutual affection? Whoever does so may equally well seek to condemn all proper self-love, and thus fall into the error of those ascetics who, with the best intentions, allow themselves to be infected with a kind of Jansenism, unnatural in religion, and irreligious in nature; they fail to perceive that on their principles the human heart would be too completely dried up by the burning heat of their kind of "pure and unselfish love" of God for any blossom of true affection to grow there at all.

If we start with the definition of true or perfect love, we shall understand better the heavenly manner of loving.

"Love consists in our wishing well to some one, for his sake and not our own, and in our trying with all our might to procure for him what is good." This is Aristotle's definition, and it has been adopted by Christianity as conveying the idea of the perfect love of friendship or benevolence, whereas the imperfect love of desire has its aim and ultimate cause, not in the object to which it is directed, but in another different object.

Because the lover wishes well to the beloved as sincerely as to himself, he regards himself to some extent as one with the beloved. St. Thomas Aquinas agrees with Aristotle and St. Augustine when he says, "A lover aims always at union with the person he loves, and the union is one that corresponds with the special nature of each and with the kind of their love." In its very essence true love is a union of the lover and the beloved, and is a union according to the will or the inclination, for one who loves unselfishly, because he delights in his beloved, cherishes such goodwill towards the other as to find his own happiness in that of the other, and deems himself happy because he sees his beloved happy. From this union proceeding from inclination, or from the community of interests, in consequence of which the lover feels himself one with the beloved, arises automatically a desire for actual union, a longing to be near the beloved, to see and possess the other.

Even here on earth we can and should be united with God and find in Him our peace and joy. To the *perfect* possession and enjoyment of God the soul attains only in the next life, when it enters light and peace everlasting. Then it can cry out like the bride in the Canticle of Canticles, "My Beloved to me, and I to Him." "I feel absolute certainty," says St. Bonaven-

ture, "that the angels and saints rejoice far more over Thy honor and glory, O God, than over their own. Incomparably more shall we delight in Thine infinite power, wisdom and goodness, than in our own happiness." "The blessed," says St. Thomas, "love God, not only because He is good, generous and merciful towards them, but still more because He is in Himself good, generous and merciful."

But must not the mighty furnace of pure love of God consume all self-love? We reply that man, by virtue of his nature, is absolutely incapable of a love in which he abandons all consideration of self. In consequence of an inborn instinct we love our own being and desire its full perfection. The reason for this instinct lies implanted in our very nature, and is inseparable from it. Everything that is expedient for, or pleasing to, our nature can be an object of our love, whilst nothing that is in disagreement with it, or bears no relation to any aspect of it, has power to attract us. Nothing altogether out of connection with the welfare, perfection, and happiness of our nature can arouse its satisfaction and goodwill. St. Thomas says, "Assuming the impossible case that God were not a good for man, He could not be the foundation and object of human love." Therefore we are so made that we can love God, the supreme Good, only on the assumption that He is *our* good, but this does not mean that we always exclusively, or even chiefly, love Him because He is our good, the Author of our happiness. The recognition of God as our good is indeed the necessary condition, but it is not the necessary motive of our love for Him. On the contrary, our love reaches its highest degree when the soul loves God for His own sake, because He is in Himself the supreme Good, the culmination of all perfection, — in short, because He is what He is.

This is the way in which God is loved by the blessed; they rejoice at His goodness for His own sake more than because they share it; they exult in His majesty and glory, more than in their own salvation, and it moves them more that He is the cause of His own happiness, than that He is also the cause of theirs. To them He is all in all, incessantly loved above all else; not merely the highest good, most worthy of their love, but their sole aim and the sole object of all love, inasmuch as they love whatever is not God only in God and for His sake.

This is the fourth and highest degree of perfect love of God of which St. Bernard writes: "I know not whether any one here below has ever been permitted fully to reach the fourth stage, where man loves himself solely for God's sake. Some may assert that they have experienced it, but I must say frankly that it seems to me impossible. It will however really come to pass in that hour when the good and faithful servant enters into the joy of his Lord, and is entranced by the delights of God's house."

The blessed rest completely in God, having found in Him the gratification of all their desires. They know that their love is at its fullest height, for they now enjoy the most perfect union with God, their supreme Good. The fullness of enjoyment is inseparable from the fullness of love, but this perfect peace and joy in God does not paralyze the soul's native instinct to consider itself. If it wished to forget that God was its final aim and good, its possession and delight, it would deprive its love of its self-conscious support and natural root, and by robbing its happiness of its required foundation it would destroy itself.

Red-hot iron neither feels nor enjoys its heat; an animal feels pleasure, but does not enjoy it because it cannot make it the object of reflex perception. But a soul that sees God feels and enjoys the abundance of its happiness; it realizes its likeness to the Source of all truth, beauty, and goodness, the completion of its whole being, the fulfilment of all its wishes, the vigorous activity of all its faculties. In a word, it knows that it has been deemed worthy of union with its God, and perceives how it has been permitted to share it, and delights incessantly at thus perceiving itself worthy of love, and exults in the purest self-love, which is more or less intense, according to the degree of grace and glory bestowed upon it; for the more worthy a soul is of love in God's eyes, the more worthy is it of it in its own sight.

In the blessed there is no room for selfishness, but only for a properly ordered self-love, which, being inborn in us, can never be extinguished. It is the condition preliminary to all love, for if we did not love our own nature, we could not love anything related and beneficial to it. The argument that, even on earth, all regard for self must be excluded by the highest degree of perfect love of God, shows ignorance of the very nature of love.

Some saints, such as St. Jane Frances of Chantal, St. Bridget, and St. Catherine of Siena, have, in moments of grievous temptation or abundant grace, looked away from their own salvation and given utterance to the heroic words, "If there were no heaven, or if hell were to be my abode in the next life, I should still not cease to love Thee, O my God!" Such outpourings of rapture are not to be condemned as fervid extravagances, but they are not within the reach of all. They presuppose a high degree of perfection and a special grace that is not given to everyone. Even those privileged souls that submitted absolutely to God's will always did so with the reservation that they desired to retain His friendship and suffer for His glory, and consequently they did not renounce the happiness of being united with Him in love, nor did they divert themselves of the delight that naturally accompanies love. The more deeply they contemplated God's goodness, the more perfectly did their will harmonize with His divine will, and the greater was their joy and pleasure in Him. To love God while wishing to renounce joy and peace in Him is really to annihilate love; and, on the other hand, to allow the damned the bliss of union with God in love, is equivalent to changing hell into heaven.

Moreover those whose love of God is most intense never forget that self-love is not only permissible and meritorious, but also a duty, and that, if all that commit sin and iniquity are enemies to their own soul, genuine self-love increases proportionately to their love of God. For as the love of God increases, so does the beauty of the soul, and consequently its worthiness of love in God's sight and its own.

The self-love of the blessed, which, as we have seen, is quite compatible with perfect love of God, can still more easily be brought into harmony with perfect love of one another. St. Albert the Great, and St. Thomas, both state emphatically that in heaven, next after God, we shall love ourselves most of all, although we shall wish to all who excel us in sanctity a higher degree of happiness than our own. It is a law of nature that we love ourselves best, and perfect charity towards our neighbor consists in loving him *as we love ourselves,* i.e., with pure benevolence and asking no return. If we had to leave off loving ourselves, we could no longer love others as ourselves. We shall, indeed, esteem more highly than ourselves those who

are better loved by God, and we shall give them precedence in honor, dignity, and glory, but we shall not love them so ardently as ourselves.

It is not only the value of a thing in and for itself that determines the degree of our love; this is influenced greatly by the relation in which the thing loved stands to those who love it. Many a poor man may value knowledge above wealth, but in time of need he will prefer money to a learned book. However much importance parents may attach to intellectual endowments and progress, they will nevertheless take far more pleasure in very mediocre performances and abilities of their own children than in the greater talents of the children of others. We love God primarily as good to us, and only secondarily as good to other people. Although by the gift of His grace He stands nearer to others than to us, and thus makes them better and more lovable even in our own eyes, we nevertheless love Him for His relation to us, more than on account of His relations to others; in short, we love Him more in ourselves than in any other creature. Thus we rejoice more over bliss that is our own, though lower in degree, than over that of our neighbor, yet less than our God's own bliss, and we praise and thank Him more fervently for being our supreme Good than for being that of our companions, and we shall be happier because He has saved us than because He has saved others.

There is something further to be said regarding the nature and privileges of the love of our neighbor in heaven. Among the blessed, to whom God is the supreme object and sole motive of all love, a self-seeking love, or the love of desire, can, of course, have no place. The only love that exists in heaven is that of the purest benevolence and friendship. The craving for union, and the desire for each other's good, are satisfied, and therefore the only way in which charity towards one's neighbor can be expressed is by the pure and heart-felt joy with which each wishes the other his due share of happiness. St. Thomas distinguishes different degrees of love, on the one hand such as correspond to the various good things that the lover wishes for the beloved, and, on the other, according to the fervor with which he wishes them.

With regard to the variety of good things, every soul in glory that concurs completely with God's will must without envy

desire for each of his companions the degree of bliss assigned him by God's justice according to his merits. Every soul in heaven honestly rejoices that all whose merits are greater than its own have received a greater reward, and in this sense it loves most those who stand higher in God's friendship, and those who served God better and have won a more glorious crown.

St. Augustine says therefore to virgins: "The rest of the host of the faithful, who cannot follow the Lamb, will behold you, but not look askance upon you, and by sharing in your joy they will possess in you what they themselves lack. They will not be able to join you in singing the new song, but they will hear it and delight in it. You who both sing and hear it — for you hear it from your own lips — will feel more intense happiness and enjoy greater glory, but no one will be afflicted at the fuller measure of your bliss, for the Lamb whom you follow, wherever He goes, will not forsake those who cannot follow Him with you. He goeth before you, yet He leaveth not the rest, for He is God, all in all. Those therefore who have less than you will not envy you. In heaven there is no ill will, and love and harmony are not disturbed by the inequality of the glory."

Since the time for work and merit is for ever at an end, no one can aspire to a larger reward than has already been assigned to him, nor can he desire for his nearest relatives and friends anything beyond what they already possess. Each one will enjoy what he has, and feel no sorrow at not having more. "In the due proportion of our pay to merits is large measure of our joy" (Dante, *Paradise* vi, 118, trans. Longfellow).

St. Augustine remarks that the angels cannot be jealous of the archangels, as little as a child can be angry because it cannot eat as much food as an adult, nor can an eye complain of not being a finger, and in the same way it is impossible for the saints to envy one another because they differ in glory. Together with the gift that he has deserved, each receives the further benefit that he desires no more than he deserves. There are many mansions in our Father's kingdom, but there is no envy, no ill-will, and no jealousy, to disturb its peace. At the great marriage feast in heaven not one guest will feel aggrieved because to him or one of his friends has been assigned a lower place than to others, who in life were strangers to him, though

nearer to God. All the guests at that banquet will be inspired with the love and harmony which our Lord prayed might be given them; being one with Him, they will be also one with each other, as He is one with the Father and the Holy Ghost.

By way of illustrating the new relation of men to one another, St. Francis of Sales uses the following *simile*: "A father had two sons, one being a little boy, the other a tall young man. As a token of his affection he had a fine new coat of costly material made for each. Both will be satisfied, because they receive the same evidence of their father's affection, yet the elder brother's coat requires three times as much material, and consequently will cost three times the money as the little boy's. No one can deny it; but if you were to ask the younger son whether he would like to exchange his coat for his brother's, he would say 'No,' for he could not wear the bigger coat, and his own fits him well, and is just as good."

Finally, let us turn to Dante, the immortal author of the *Divine Comedy*, and hear what he learnt from Beatrice regarding the friendships existing between the inhabitants of Paradise. Dante asks her:

"But tell me, ye who here are happy made,
Do ye desire to gain a loftier place,
To see more, make more friends?" With many a shade
That near her stood, she first, with smiling face
Looked on me, then made answer with such joy,
She seemed to glow with fire of love's first grace:
"Brother, the might of love gives such employ
To our desires, that it can make us will
Just what we have, unmixed with thirst's alloy.
If we desired to pass on higher still,
Then our desires would be at variance found
With His, who bids us here His mansions fill.
This thou wilt see in these spheres hath no ground,
If love be still the one thing needful here,
And if its nature thou search well all round.
So of our bliss this is cause formal, clear
That each upon God's will himself should stay,
That so our wills may all one Will appear.
So our whole realm rejoiceth in the way
In which from stage to stage we upward mount,
As doth the King whose will doth our wills sway.
And in His Will of our peace is the fount;
That is the sea whereto all beings move,
Which as its works or Nature's works we count."
Full clearly then her words to me did prove
How everywhere in Heaven is Paradise,
Though not on all alike God's grace pours love.

DANTE, *Paradise*, III, 64–90, trans. Longfellow.

According, therefore, to Dante, the relation existing among the perfect in heaven is similar to that existing between them and God. All creatures have their place in God's heart, and are loved by Him in proportion to their moral worth. But just as God can and does love His creatures for His own sake alone, because He has brought them into being and set upon them the mark of His own image, so the soul in glory will love all created beings for God's sake, because it recognizes them in and through God.

We may now go on to ask how the bonds of friendship, forged on earth, can be reconciled with the new order prevailing in the other world. On one occasion our Lord pointed to His disciples and said, "Behold my mother and my brethren; for whosoever shall do the will of my Father that is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Matth. xii. 49). St. Ambrose writes: "You, whom I begat in the Gospel, I love no less than if I had begotten you in wedlock, for in this matter of love nature is not stronger than grace. Undoubtedly those who, as we hope, will be with us for ever, have a greater claim upon our love than those who are with us merely on earth."

Whatever is true of communion in faith and grace during this life seems to be still more true of communion in glory hereafter, for there the purest and most unselfish love of God prevails over all other relations. For this love to be perfect, it must be duly ordered, i.e., the degree of love must be proportionate to the worth and dignity of its object, so that those are more loved who, owing to their greater sanctity, stand nearer to God, and are therefore worthier of love. How can a soul that is absolutely subject to the will of God, and receives from Him alone the motives and guidance of its love, reverse the order that He observes, and, with regard to flesh and blood, prefer those who, owing to their imperfection, are loved less by Him? Hence must there not in the future life be a change in the order of our affections, so that, among the innumerable favorites of God, those will merit and occupy the first place in our hearts who were strangers to us in life, that, indeed, the last may be first, and the first last?

In spite, then, of the certainty of reunion, any *special* love and friendship between those who have known and loved one another in life would seem not only superfluous, but actually

impossible in the next world, and, if this be so, reunion after death would seem to lose some of its joy, at least the hope of it suffers in its consolation.

But abundant compensation is offered us; association with all God's elect, with the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament, with the apostles, martyrs, confessors, and penitents, and with all the numberless souls surrounding our Lord and His Virgin Mother, welcoming each new comer as an old acquaintance and friend. Yet to a mourner even this compensation may appear insufficient to make good the loss of one dearly loved, or rather the heart wounded by the agony of bereavement is not at once capable of such exalted consolation.

There is, however, a form of comfort better calculated to soothe our natural grief, and it also is a gift from above. We maintain that the blessed in heaven love one another primarily according to the relation in which they stand to God, but they do not for that reason cease to love one another according to the relation in which they stood in this life, since, as St. Thomas says, no motive for true and generous love will vanish from our souls.

From the fact that at the Transfiguration on Thabor Moses and Elias were at once recognized by the apostles, St. Francis of Sales infers that we shall all know one another in heaven, and continues thus: "If this be so, what a joy it will be to us to recognize those who were so dear to us here below. The holy friendships, begun in due dependence upon God in this life, will last for ever in the next. Certain persons we shall love with particular affection, but not in any spirit of exclusiveness, for this would be impossible, since all friendships will have their source in the love of God, and this makes us love each individual with that pure love with which His goodness surrounds us."

There is, therefore, in heaven only *one* love, in as far as all love is for God's sake, and this love includes within itself, controls and sanctifies all other affection. It extends to all that is worthy of God's goodwill and pleasure. It is the universal motive, governing all other motives by absorbing them into itself. The purification and expansion of our former love are necessary effects of this law.

Our love for our friends in heaven will be free from all partiality, and therefore will correspond precisely to the clearly

recognized moral worth of the person loved. We shall certainly not be able to wish those, who naturally have the chief claim to our affection, to possess a higher degree of happiness than they deserve. As our self-love also will be purified and regulated, we shall not desire even for ourselves a greater measure of joy than has been assigned to us. But nevertheless we can love both ourselves and our friends with peculiar ardor; at least such is the demand of every heart that mourns over the loss of one near and dear, and longs to be reunited with him. This expectation is reasonable, for the temporal bonds which grace has partly created, partly confirmed and ratified, are not fully recognized and valued, either in their nature or in their significance for time and for eternity, until they are seen in the fullness of everlasting light.

Unions that God has established and blessed on earth will attain to perfect beauty and strength in heaven.

Carneri concludes that the religious conception of heaven is a great thought because in it "all individuality is obliterated and merged into the universal." Any Catholic school-boy could tell him that he is mistaken; no catechism contains an account of heaven in the least resembling Carneri's idea, for he says that, "our individuality will perish with our bodies, and we become something absolutely different; we may meet our friends, but this affords no gratification to our hearts, inasmuch as we no longer have hearts, and under such circumstances it is a matter of indifference whether we meet them again or not."

All the higher reasons that make us bestow peculiar affection upon particular fellow creatures will have effect also in the other life; then we shall be able to love each just as much as he deserves. All the false standards of this world will be replaced with new. Ingratitude, coldness, indifference, contempt, and neglect will be made good in that happy assemblage, where good intentions will not fail to be understood and recognized, where prejudice, partiality, and selfishness will cease to influence our judgment, where suspicion never makes itself felt, and where each one's life is revealed like a picture to the eyes of all. Clear knowledge and perfect truth control the intellect, and the purest goodwill and most unselfish love inspire every mind. The expansion of our love makes us greet as familiar friends those who were strangers to us on earth, but this does not prevent

us from preserving the closest intimacy with our former friends. It might not be so on earth, where each kind of love is more or less exclusive, but perfect love is free from the defects of our love here. All the blessed are known to and related with one another, yet those who were relatives and friends on earth are still such, nor are they in the least estranged because the number of our friends is increased.

Some, mindful of our Saviour's words, "If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children . . . yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple," have renounced everything that might be an impediment to their love of God; but in so doing they have not extirpated from their hearts their love of themselves or of their friends, but have purified and widened it by heroic self-sacrifice, firmly believing that in the other life they will receive an hundredfold for all that they have abandoned here. Those who were wanting in love towards their nearest of kin have never been remarkable for their love of humanity in general.

Finally, a conclusion cannot be drawn from the fact that in this life during a supernatural state of ecstasy the soul is insensible to all natural relations, and occupied solely with God and divine things. These instances do not supply us with a rule universally applicable to the circumstances of the other life; they are but a weak shadow and foretaste of it, permitting us in some small degree to understand what it will be.

It is quite certain that the new and perfect order of the other life does not bring the human heart into conflict with its most natural and justifiable feelings, but nature and glory will harmonize in the same wonderful way as nature and grace. St. Catherine of Siena represents our Saviour as saying: "Perfect love, which unites all my elect inseparably with one another, does not hinder a particularly joyous and holy connection between those who have loved one another on earth. This mutual love impels them to grow in my grace and to go on from virtue to virtue, for each helps the other onto the way of salvation, each supports the other in the task of increasing my glory in themselves and in their neighbors. This holy love is not diminished in eternity, but obtains for them a greater abundance of spiritual joy and delight."

After His Ascension our Lord did not sever, or even loosen,

the bond by which He was united to His Mother at the Incarnation; on the contrary He preserved Her body from corruption, by raising it again immediately after death and taking it to Himself. In His Father's kingdom He has not ceased to call her who bore Him by the sweet name of Mother; He delights in her beauty and rejoices in her presence. Our Lady, too, is full of happiness; loving and praising her Redeemer because He is the only-begotten Son of the Father, but also because He is her own son, her Jesus. This relation of mother and child, between the most perfect Mother and the most perfect Son, is the fairest blossom of the love rooted in flesh and blood, and at the same time its supreme model, unattainable indeed, but reflected in the innumerable family of God in heaven.

A few remarks may now be added regarding the spiritual and moral dignity, the imperishable beauty, fidelity, and delight of heavenly love. The dependence of the mind with its will and affections upon the bodily senses is removed, or rather reversed; the higher will finds in the lower, not an obstinate opponent, but an obedient servant and faithful ally. The emotions no longer outstrip the control and sanction of the will, but wait for its permission; the heart does not withdraw itself from the supervision of reason, but readily submits to its decisions.

Whilst we live on earth our minds, dispositions, characters, and inclinations are continually influenced by changing sensations and moods that are more or less free from the action of the will. Changes of health, climate, and surroundings always affect the nervous system and the circulation of the blood. Any bodily disturbance upsets the mind, and *vice versa.* A fickle disposition angrily rejects today what it approved of yesterday, and will scorn tomorrow what it sanctions today. A bad temper is apt to put a bad interpretation upon a friendly action, to discover an intentional slight in a harmless word, to take pleasure in frustrating the designs of others, even if intended for its own good; it will feign suffering in order to enjoy the trouble and anxiety thus caused to others. The melancholy of a gloomy person, ingenious in discovering misfortunes and hardships; the whims and grumbling of a morose person; the oversensitiveness of one who is always suspecting slights and insults; the despondency of a man about his moral weakness; — all these maladies of the mind and many others, not to

mention the really vicious, not only injure their victims but are liable to destroy the good temper of others. Sufferers of this kind are in the habit of falling foul precisely of those nearest to them, and of hurting most those who attempt to soothe and comfort them. Sympathetic love is not satisfied to play the inactive part of a spectator when the imps of bad temper begin to run riot; yet any effort to soothe them is apt to incite fresh outbursts and defiance. A discontented expression, continual bad temper, an irritable and surly disposition, an angry, insulting, and quarrelsome manner, — these are the outward signs of an unhappy mind, the chief cause of which is often a morbid tendency of body, often inherited. These evil dispositions ought not at once to be referred to bad intention and perversity of will, no more than innate good temper can be considered to be a virtue. Thoughtful natures, apt to brood over every little idea and event, dissecting every motive, are just the ones apt to be annoyed, and even to show violent anger at mere trifles. Often under a rough exterior there is a precious kernel, the true value of which is frequently either not suspected or not appreciated, because, when we feel attraction or aversion, we cannot shake off our own disposition and outward impressions. Sometimes the heart succeeds without difficulty in warping the judgment of reason and overpowering the will; and our opinion rises and falls according to the height of our emotions. This being the case, it is obvious that love can easily go astray both in its object and in its degree; and experience teaches us that misunderstandings small and great often cause love to perish.

Although the spirit made in God's likeness dwells in the heart of man, and God Himself makes His influence felt, down in the depths is the Evil One, the crafty foe of virtue and grace. The many-headed Hydra, the tendency to evil, never sleeps, and it is always on the watch for an unguarded moment to take the spirit by surprise, and plunge it into falsehood, deceit, disloyalty, treason, or other vices. Hence no one can be sure today whether he will tomorrow be worthy of the esteem of good men; still less can he tell whether he will be justified in respecting those whom now he loves. Everyone of us has his painful experience, his bitter disappointments.

It is a joy to meet a great man, to come in contact with a pure and holy soul; but there are many famous persons whose great-

ness and virtue are dazzling only from a distance; closer acquaintance reveals many flaws in their character. Many who are heroes abroad are insignificant at home, and the dignity with which their admirers clothe them is without warrant. Disappointed enthusiasm gives place to vexation, which is too apt to go to the opposite extreme of censorious judgment. Hence we live in continual doubt as to the great man whom we have revered as almost supernatural, and we ask ourselves whether he will continue to be great or whether his greatness will be found to be spurious. Most people have a distrust in mankind, and suspicion poisons even intimate friendships and genuine esteem.

The soul fares better in the state of separation, yet it gladly returns to its body, being destined ultimately to form with it one whole.

Its reunion with the body would not, however, be a benefit if it involved the renewal of the disastrous incongruity to which we have already referred. We shall see further on that the soul will be the ruler of the body in the other life, far more thoroughly than in this. Through the soul the body will receive from God a new life with all its magnificent gifts and powers, but it will use these things only in obedience to the soul's orders. The body is raised from the dead in order that in heaven man may be complete and active, and it will participate in all the soul's activity according to the standard of its own nature and with its master's consent, so that this activity may be truly human and more delightful to both agents.

Thus it will follow that love, when purified in glory, does not forfeit any of its genuine character. After the resurrection the disposition and the emotions proceeding from it recover their rights. The dross due to human frailty and sin will not exist in the pure fire that is rekindled when friends, who loved on earth, meet again in heaven; all that is imperfect will cease, whether its imperfection be due to excess or default. Our love will no longer be stained with distrust, envy, disloyalty, or jealousy, nor will it be tortured by fear. There can be no deception, and consequently no disappointment; our knowledge of ourselves and others will be perfect, and all that here was hidden from public observation, details of personality, and the secret sources of our activity, thoughts and feelings — in short,

all the mysteries of our inner life will be revealed as pure and holy, and a cause of pleasure to beholders.

To those on whom has been bestowed a soul disposed to love it is very difficult to keep this precious gift within strictly chaste limits; it is an object of warfare, and one is sometimes tempted to regret the gift or to desire greater liberty. This weakness, which Lacordaire describes so tenderly, ceases for ever as soon as the loving heart is finally admitted to the liberty of God's children; for then there are no forbidden cravings, no conflict between the law of the spirit and the law of the flesh.

Yet love, though it then resembles that of the angels, will not cease to be as strong as it has been in its imperfect condition; rather it will exert greater influence than ever before, and affect us both individually and collectively, dominating our minds and hearts. Its action will be irresistible though gentle, like that of the tongues of fire that came down upon the apostles at Pentecost. When we meet again in glory our loving hearts will overflow with never-ending joy, to which no finite, earthly joy is comparable. Now we have but a faint foreshadowing of it when meeting beloved friends again after long separation.

Mourners bowed down with sorrow may therefore rejoice in the hope of reunion beyond the grave, and entertain the entrancing thought that there they will love their dear ones yet more fervently than hitherto.

* * *

Christian faith in the glorification and eternity of love discredits the arguments of those who abuse Christianity as the sworn foe of all that is natural, and extol the Greek view of life as the genuine religion of humanity. On the other hand our faith protects us against the unnatural doctrines of materialism. Buckle, who is by many regarded as the mouthpiece of modern thought, writes: "When the very signs of life are mute; when the last faint tie is severed, and there lies before us nought save the shell and husk of what we loved too well; then truly, if we believed the separation were final, how could we stand up and live? We have staked our all upon a single cast, and lost the stake. There, where we have garnered up our hearts, and

where our treasure is, thieves break in and spoil. Methinks that in that moment of desolation the best of us would succumb but for the deep conviction that all is not really over, that we have as yet only seen a part, and that something remains behind. . . . If this be a delusion, it is one which the affections have themselves created, and we must believe that the purest and noblest elements of our nature conspire to deceive us. So surely as we lose what we love, so surely does hope mingle with grief" (Buckle, *Essays*, p. 119, 1867). Christianity finds a place for natural unions in the kingdom of God, and does not forbid that grief be intermingled with hope; indeed, it actually insists upon it. His faith permits a Christian to be fully human, while it bids him be a true Christian.

CHAPTER X

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

WHEN the heart stops beating, the soul is freed from the body and departs into the land of immortality. What ceases to be is not my whole life; what dies is not my whole self; not even the body is for ever dead. Yet, if that which lives must die, how can that which is dead live again? To this argument, put forward by the Sadducees, the orthodox Jews already gave the excellent answer: If that which was not, could come into being, might not that which once was, exist again? Nine-tenths of the objections raised by modern unbelievers against the great dogma of the resurrection are out of date; the earliest Fathers of the Church knew them and deprived them of all force by referring to the wonderful transformations in the natural life. St. Ignatius, St. Clement of Rome, Minucius Felix, Theophilus of Antioch, and Irenaeus stoutly defended the resurrection of the body, and St. Polycarp actually calls those who deny it "the first born of Satan." Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Athenagoras, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose, Methodius, and especially St. Augustine and St. John Chrysostom, devoted particular treatises to this dogma of faith, and elucidated it with many beautiful thoughts and similes. Among later writers there were especially St. Thomas and Suarez, who refuted attempts to prove the resurrection impossible.

St. John Chrysostom addresses non-believers in the words: "The doubter and the unbeliever ask whether our bodies will also rise again. I answer with St. Paul, 'Senseless man, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die first' (1 Cor. xv. 36). Shall He who for thy sake maketh the corn to grow, not be able to reawaken thee for His own sake? . . . Can it be that man, who alone on earth knows and honors God, is des-

tined to perish for ever? Yet thou doubtest whether thy body can be restored after death, since it will decay. Tell me, O man, what wast thou, before thy mother conceived thee? Nothing, absolutely nothing — and cannot God, who created thee out of nothing, even more easily restore thee out of something? It is easier to restore that which once existed, than to bring into being that which never existed at all. God, who created thee in thy mother's womb, can surely renew thy being from the womb of earth. Art thou afraid lest thy dry bones could not again be clothed with flesh? Cease to measure God's omnipotence by the standard of thy weakness. Each year He clothes the bare trees with fresh leaves, and the meadows with grass; He will cover thy bones again when the springtime of the resurrection comes. The prophet Ezechiel once doubted whether this would be so, but God showed him in a vision how 'the bones came together, each one to its joint . . . the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin was stretched out over them . . . and the spirit came into them, and they lived, and they stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army' (Ezech. xxxvii. 8, 10). Thus God convinced the prophet by means of a vision, and he recorded this vision, in order that posterity also might know this great truth. Isaias, too, exclaims, 'Thy dead men shall live, my slain shall rise again' (xxvi. 19). Just as dew makes the grass shoot forth and grow, so will God's spiritual dew cause the dead to live again. But thou doubtest whether a complete body can be formed out of the many minute particles, into which it was resolved by death. Consider that thou thyself canst produce a great fire from a little spark; why should not God restore thy body in its entirety from a few ashes? If thou maintainest that of a body nothing is left, since it has been consumed by fire, or devoured by wild beasts, remember that all will return to earth, the ashes and the beast that has devoured the man; all returns to earth, and by God's almighty word all can be brought back from earth. Look at thyself — where no spark of fire is present, thou usest steel and flint, and from the heart of the stone thou drawest all the fire thou needest. The fire was, as it were, buried in the flint, and thou hast awakened it. Since thou, with the intelligence given thee by God, canst effect this, inasmuch as thou callest into being the spark previously hidden and buried, how should God

with His omnipotent majesty be unable to accomplish the same? Truly, God is almighty."

Considering the countless wonders revealed by telescope and microscope, scientists have surely no reason to assert what they call the physical and geographical impossibility of a resurrection. God needs the advice of neither physicist nor mathematician in order to learn how to restore a body devoured by a cannibal without affecting the cannibal's own body, nor how He will make the valley of Josaphat contain the countless host of mankind after the resurrection.

The very scientist who scorns the science of Christianity is continually confronted with processes and changes in nature for which he cannot account. All his learning and his genius break down even before a blade of grass and the tiny worm. A Christian should be ashamed to allow himself to be shaken in his faith in the resurrection by the loose arguments of those who wish their whole existence to end in a handful of ashes. The great Fathers and theologians of the Church, such as St. John Chrysostom, find in the knowledge of nature an effectual means of defence against the attacks of unbelievers.

Though the study of nature reminds us perpetually of the fleeting character of earthly things, it also holds out to us the joyful prospect of rejuvenescence. The spring flowers wither, the green pastures dry up, and summer gives place to autumn, when cold winds strip the leaves off the branches, and soon winter reigns supreme. Yet nature does not remain long in the slumber of death. She awakes at the first breath of spring and resumes her work with fresh energy and joy in life. While she slept, she was gathering strength, and she comes forth each year in splendor and glory to celebrate her resurrection.

Tertullian admonishes us to consider God's power and says: "The day passes away into night and is buried in darkness. The beauty of the world disappears and everything vanishes, sinking into silence and stillness, and losing all its color. We mourn the loss of light, but it lives on in all its beauty and gladness. It slays its foe, the darkness, and bursts forth from its grave, until at length night again approaches, and once more the stars shine forth that had been extinguished by the morning glow. . . . Wonderful is the wisdom that takes away, in order to preserve; that deprives, in order to restore; that destroys, in

order to save; that spoils, in order to repair; that diminishes, in order to increase. It gives back, with more abundant beauty, what it has annihilated, and makes reparation for all damage done. There can be no doubt that all creation will be restored."

St. Paul, as we have seen, resorts to the use of a metaphor from nature in order to make the Corinthians understand the doctrine of the resurrection. In the decay of the lifeless body he perceives an indispensable condition of a new and better life, not an impediment to it. "Senseless man," he says, "that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die first. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be, but bare grain, as of wheat, or of some of the rest. But God giveth it a body as He will, and to every seed its proper body" (1 Cor. xv. 36, *seqq.*). Just as seed corn cannot produce a new plant with new fruit until it has decayed in corruption, so must the human body decay before it can attain to its higher destiny. If you store up the grain ever so carefully it will not increase in quantity, but if you bury it in the earth, it will bear increased fruit. Our bodies are like the grain, and are destined to blossom forth in magnificent glory when the last day calls them to resurrection and joy eternal.

True, the comparison does not hold good in every point, for the seed corn lying in the earth does not actually die, but retains a living germ, which, under the influence of heat and moisture, bursts forth and becomes a new plant. Moreover, the grain that this plant bears differs not, indeed, in kind, but in identity from that buried in the earth; they are not one and the same seed. But the human body dies, and contains no living germ, no hidden power, that will enable it in course of time to fashion a new body by natural process — and the body that rises again is identical with that which was laid in the grave.

Another charming symbol, not only of the soul, as we often hear it used nowadays, but also of the resurrection, is the butterfly, that was once a caterpillar, which we rail against for injuring our gardens, so that we are glad when the time comes for it to weave itself a delicate garment from materials supplied by its own body, and become a chrysalis. The little cocoon is the chrysalis's coffin and the butterfly's cradle. After the lapse of a number of days the prison in which the caterpillar was confined opens, and a new creature comes forth, that does not crawl

slowly along the earth, but flies through the air, delighting us with the brilliancy of its coloring. This marvel of nature is not a perfect type of the resurrection, but the wonderful change in the insect that takes place during its time of seclusion is a striking illustration of the glory of a risen body, and should at least suggest to the opponents of Christianity that changes, analogous to those in the caterpillar and the apparently lifeless chrysalis, may raise another creature — the king of visible creation — to a higher stage of bodily existence.

As long as the caterpillar crawls on the cabbage leaf, it remains what it is; but if it prepares for itself a grave and lies motionless within, it will eventually turn into a beautiful butterfly. — Sooner or later you will become unfit for work, your sight and hearing will fail, your powers will decay, but after sleeping for awhile in the grave, dead to this world, you will awaken to new life and recover all your youthful strength and beauty. How could the body, the abode of an immortal soul, be less privileged than the caterpillar's cocoon? How could the comrade of an undying spirit be of less consequence than a poor little insect, and be destined to complete decay? No, this cannot be, and Christianity asserts emphatically that the body will rise again.

Many of the symbols that we see on graves are quite unsuitable, especially those borrowed from paganism. The best memorial over a Christian's grave is the symbol of redemption and hope, viz., a simple cross, with a brief inscription and a request for a prayer.

Of course the transformation of a decayed body into one that is immortal, and, in the case of the just, glorified, is a miracle of divine Omnipotence, a free act of God's goodness, and a gift of grace, one not necessary to our human nature, and to which we therefore have no claim. On the other hand, it seems opposed both to God's design in creating us and to our own nature, that our bodies should remain for ever in the grave.

Man, being made of body and soul, stands midway between the material and the spiritual world; he belongs to both, and unites both in himself. His body is by nature liable to death, but by being united with an immortal spirit it is raised to a higher stage of existence. Therefore, although it is formed of earth and derives its nourishment thence, the Creator has chosen it

as a representative of the material world which is ever striving after perfection, and thereby is enabled also to obtain its proper place in heaven.

Common sense rebels against the assumption that God would remove the connecting link and middle term of all creation from the orderly arrangement of His kingdom. Yet this would happen if the soul after death were permanently deprived of a body, for the soul alone is not a complete human being, but only the chief constituent in humanity, and thus the argument already advanced is strengthened by the needs and desires of human nature. In virtue of his natural being, man has an inalienable right to the continued existence only of his soul, but not to the incorruptibility of his body, since neither the vital principle nor the matter out of which his body is fashioned, have the power to maintain their union for ever. On its material side the human organism, like everything else formed of matter, is subject to the law of decay, from which it was originally exempt by a special favor of God, but to which it was at once subjugated when man fell into sin.

The natural vital force of the soul is incapable of preserving the body from destruction; still less can it renew the union after it has been severed. Yet even after its separation from the body the soul retains both the ability and the inclination to be reunited with the body that was once its dwelling, instrument, and companion. Its nature is not altered by death, and it would be false to this nature were it to live on for ever unconnected with a body. Death does not deprive it of the powers given it to control the body, and therefore it is not so pure a spirit as is an angel, although the body in its present animal condition would not harmonize with the soul in its new state. St. Thomas remarks that the soul by its very nature is destined for union with a body, and as it did not exist before the body, and did not exist hitherto without the same, it must feel its separation from the body as an imperfection. Although the soul has no right to demand the body's immortality, inasmuch as, being made of dust, it was bound to return to dust, and although the soul can be active and happy without the body, yet it naturally longs for its previous companion. The soul may have often been tormented by the body, and hindered from soaring aloft, but nevertheless it was loath to leave its earthly habitation, and the de-

parture would have been still more painful had there been no prospect of a reunion.

In substantiation of the truth that we are discussing, the Catechism of the Council of Trent refers to the Fathers, and argues thus: "As souls are immortal, and since as a part of the human being they have a natural affection for the human body, we must regard it as contrary to nature for souls to be for ever separated from their bodies. That which is contrary to nature and forced cannot be permanent, hence it seems to follow that souls will be reunited with their bodies, and hence the latter must rise again. Our Saviour used this argument when He refuted the doctrines of the Sadducees and deduced the resurrection of the body from the immortality of the soul." His words were, "He (God) is not the God of the dead but of the living" (Matth. xxii. 32). Hence man must live for ever *as a whole*. Even in our Lord's time those who denied the resurrection of the body denied also the immortality of the soul.

Over and above the reasons already stated in support of this doctrine of bodily resurrection, there are considerations which show the raising of the dead to be a miracle especially appropriate to the divine perfections.

After death the body becomes a prey to corruption; its constituent parts do not perish, but enter into new combinations; yet not one of them is hidden from God's all-seeing eye, or inaccessible to His almighty hand. Why, then, should not God raise the dead and so reveal Himself as the Lord and Creator of all things, glorifying Himself before the whole world, and giving fresh proof of His goodness to man, the highest of His creatures? Finally it is in complete accord with His justice that the soul should be reunited with the body.

As the soul is not the whole of man, but only the chief constituent of his nature, it needs for its activity here below the co-operation of the body. Whatever good or evil it does, whatever reward or punishment it merits, the soul does not act independently but in conjunction with the body, its instrument and ally. It is, therefore, only fair that at the day of reckoning the body should share in the accounting, and receive reward or punishment in the degree to which it contributed to good or evil deeds. In other words, it is reasonable that the soul which gave life, sensation, and movement to the body, used it well or

ill, ruled it or was ruled by it, should be united with precisely the same body, in order that, in the pleasures or pains of the senses, it may receive a fitting increase to its own rewards or punishments.

Tertullian says on this subject, "Those who were united in work should not be separated at the time of retribution," and this is also the language used generally by the Fathers and theologians of the Church. The argument gains weight from the fact that here on earth the ungodly often prosper, and do not receive the punishment due to them, whilst the righteous suffer temporal adversity and have not their merited reward. This disproportion can, of course, be adjusted in eternity in the case even of the soul alone, but the body would go without retribution if it never rose again.

The Roman Catechism emphasizes this point. In discussing St. Paul's words, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (1 Cor. xv. 19), it remarks: "No one will apply these words to the misery of the soul, for it is immortal, and capable therefore of enjoying bliss in the future life even if the body did not rise again; hence they must be applied to man as a whole. For if the body does not receive its deserts, then necessarily those who, like the apostles, suffer many troubles and much oppression in this life, are indeed most miserable. St. Paul teaches the same doctrine even more plainly in his epistle to the Thessalonians" (2 Thess. i. 4–8).

If the body had not before it the prospect of further life and of eternal retribution, it would be still more unruly towards its master, the soul. It would say to it: "My time is short; I intend to enjoy today, for tomorrow I shall exist no more. Let me go my own way; do not thwart me, but follow my guidance, for who indeed knows what fate may be thine after death? Thou hast never been without me, and thou canst not even picture an existence apart from me." In this sense St. Paul writes: "Why are we in danger every hour? I die daily, I protest by your glory, brethren. . . . If I fought with beasts at Ephesus, what doth it profit me, if the dead rise not again? Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die" (1 Cor. xv.).

What sorrow would not the dying feel if they had no hope of resurrection? What would not be the grief of the survivors if they believed their dear ones gone for ever? When we have

lost a friend we cherish the memory of his body, by means of which alone his loving soul communicated with us; can it be possible that this body will have vanished for ever?

Hence even from a purely natural point of view reason anticipates the restoration of the body and desires it, because it deems it suitable and in accordance with all the relations of human nature and God's perfections. Nevertheless we could not be certain and at ease on the subject, unless God had directly revealed this mystery to us. And this He has done. The resurrection of the body is a fundamental dogma of Christianity, and many passages of Holy Scripture plainly testify to it as to a revealed truth.

Of the patriarchs and prophets St. John Chrysostom writes: "They rightly lamented, because Christ had not yet come from heaven, He who by His resurrection would dry all tears shed over the departed. They mourned because the death sentence still rested upon all mankind. The saints of the Old Testament hoped for the Lord's coming, but meantime they bewailed the dead for not having seen Him for whom they longed." While the consoling truth of the future resurrection was not so clearly revealed to the prophets of old, as it was later through Christ and His apostles, they were not without knowledge of it, and St. John Damascene and St. John Chrysostom are the only ones of the Fathers who do not think that the following passage from the book of Job refers to this mystery. Job, expecting nothing more from this life, said: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in the last day I shall rise out of the earth; and I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God. Whom I myself shall see, and my eyes shall behold, and not another (i.e., I shall be the same man, not another). This my hope is laid up in my bosom" (Job xix. 25–27). These words of an Old Testament saint, who lived many centuries before the birth of Christ, have been an unfailing source of consolation to the dying and to those whom they left behind.

The hope that sustained Job in his sufferings, and that filled the prophets Isaias and Ezechiel with rapture, likewise inspired the Machabees with a heroic courage that has rendered their name immortal. When they were tortured to death by the savage tyrant Antiochus Epiphanes, they remained steadfast in their faith in the Lord's promise. The first having been put to

death, the second of the seven brethren, being near death, said, "O wicked man, thou destroyest us out of this present life, but the King of the world will raise us, who die for his laws, in the resurrection of eternal life." The third, whose hands they cut off, cried, "These (hands) I have from heaven, but for the laws of God I now despise them, because I hope to receive them again from Him." The king was astonished at their courage, especially when the fourth brother, being ready to die, said, "It is better, being put to death by men, to look for hope from God, to be raised up again by Him; for, as to thee, thou shalt have no resurrection unto life." Their heroic mother strengthened her sons in this faith, and bore testimony to it herself by her own martyrdom.

St. John Chrysostom exclaims: "Since the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, and since the second Adam removed the doom pronounced against the first Adam, and by His death destroyed death, since that hour, I say, death has not been terrible to believers, who no longer fear the setting of the sun of life, because with sure hope they look forward to its rising again."

With the resurrection from the dead the work of the redemption is completed in the case of each individual; and thenceforth retribution begins also for the body, which participated in the good or bad use made of the opportunities of grace. When God pronounced the penalty of death upon our first parents and all their descendants without exception, He coupled with the promise of a Redeemer a universal remission of the penalty, in so far as the cessation of earthly existence would be only temporary and not permanent. Hence St. Paul says: "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen again, and if Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have given testimony against God, that He hath raised up Christ, whom He hath not raised up, if the dead rise not again" (1 Cor. xv. 13–15). St. Paul means that if Christ has really completed and attested His work of Redemption by the Resurrection, He must have overcome death also, because death is a consequence and punishment of sin. When the dead are recalled to life, our Saviour's triumph will be fully manifested. "Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" (ibid. v. 34).

"It is one of the great fundamental truths of Christianity," says Pascal, "that all that which took place in Christ must take place in the body and soul of each individual Christian. During His mortal life, Christ suffered and at its close He died, afterwards He rose again to new life and ascended into heaven. In the same way our bodies and souls are destined to suffer, die, rise again, ascend into heaven and sit at God's right hand. All this is done in the soul during this life, but not in the body. The soul suffers and dies to sin in baptism and penance; when summoned by God it quits earth at the hour of death and soars to heaven to sit at God's right hand. None of all these things take place in the body during this life, but hereafter. At death it is stripped of mortal life; at the Judgment it is raised to a new life, and after the Judgment it will be admitted to heaven. Thus the body fares in the same way as the soul, but at another time, and its changes begin only when those of the soul are complete, viz., at the hour of death, which is for the soul the crown and climax of full attainment, for the body, however, the beginning thereof."

As the second Adam, Christ is the new founder and head of the entire human race, because He died for all and desires to be united with all. But He is in a special sense the Head of the righteous, for at baptism they were incorporated into His body and made its members. A mystical union such as this presupposes the resurrection of the Head, but also that of the members. The Head and the members are bound to each other, and only when united form the whole body. It is only through the members, i.e., the whole number of the faithful, that Christ, their Head, attains to "the fullness of Him who is filled all in all" (Ephes. i. 23). He quickens each member with His spirit, endows it with His strength, renders it capable of good works, and binds it to Himself by faith and charity. This intimate union necessarily leads to a true community of life between the Head and the members, so that God's infinite power, revealed first at Christ's resurrection, is displayed with equal glory in the resurrection of all who either really belong, or are called to belong, to Him, so that the disciples may be like their Master.

Our Lord refers to this union between the Head and the

members when He promises resurrection from the dead and everlasting life to those who partake worthily of His most holy Body and Blood. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever. . . . He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day" (John vi.). But even apart from Holy Communion, can we imagine a living Head with dead members? a living vine with dead branches? All God's children will share the inheritance of the Only Begotten Son; those who by baptism and penance have been planted together with Christ in the likeness of His death, will be also in the likeness of His resurrection; those who suffer with Him will be also glorified with Him.

"Jesus lives, no longer now
Can thy terrors, death, appal us;
Jesus lives, by this we know,
Thou, O grave, canst not enthral us."

This truth fills us with confidence in that bitter hour when we must part from those we love. Our Lord's promise that we shall rise again is the foundation of our faith in a life after death.

"The maiden is not dead, but sleepeth." These words were uttered by Christ as He stood by the bedside of Jairus' daughter. To a Christian death is a long sleep, a time for resting from the cares and toils of life, release from the dangers and snares of the world, liberation from the assaults and temptations of the flesh. To the righteous it is not so much death as a preliminary to a glorious resurrection and a passage to perfect bliss. It is a fearful evil only when it coincides with the death of grace, but it is a benefit when it has been preceded by the death of sin. "Amen, amen, I say unto you, that he who heareth my word, and believeth Him that sent me, hath life everlasting" (John v. 24); "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, although he be dead, shall live" (John xi. 25).

The anxiety and agony of death remain an ordeal for both the dying and those around them, but the light of faith guides the failing eyes through the gloomy portal, and beyond they behold a new and better life awaiting them, knowing that death is but the prelude to it. Death is a struggle for a new existence, and this struggle will infallibly end in a glorious victory if it

has been preceded by an honest endeavor to obtain the grace for a spiritual new birth. Then "death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow; for the former things are passed away; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Apoc. xxi. 4). "And the enemy, death, shall be destroyed last" (1 Cor. xv. 26).

CHAPTER XI

THE MEETING AND PARTING ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

AT the last day we shall all without exception know one another, and not only those with whom we have been personally acquainted on earth. No one can dispute this fact without questioning the truth of the General Judgment.

At the end of time the great Judge will gather around Him all the departed, and will reveal His justice to them and the angels, in order to honor the good and shame the wicked. Then He will bring to light hidden merit and maligned innocence, secret thoughts, and all the works of darkness. He will tear off the mask from all hypocrisy and deceit, and openly put to shame all falsehood, cunning, and treachery. He will set their sins before the face of the ungodly, and make compensation to the just for all the wrongs they have suffered. All this must be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ, so that all men may know and judge one another according to their works, and confirm the sentence given by the Son of Man. St. Thomas Aquinas thinks that every individual will read at a glance not only his own conscience, but the hearts of all men. The General Judgment will be a magnificent justification of God's government of heaven and earth. Then will be fulfilled the threat uttered by our Lord to the stubborn Pharisees, "Your children shall be your judges" (Matth. xii. 27). "Know you not," says St. Paul, "that the saints shall judge this world?" (1 Cor. vi. 2). Our Lord foretold that at His second coming the twelve apostles should sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matth. xix. 28). And in order to judge, they must certainly know the deeds, good or evil, of each individual.

There the elect and the reprobate will meet — the apostles and their persecutors, the martyrs and their executioners, the Lamb of God and His enemies. Eulalia of Emerita, the foremost Spanish martyr, bade Calpurnianus, the prefect of Lusi-

tania, to look at her face, so that when they would meet before the judgment seat of Christ he might recognize her, and receive the retribution he deserved. This meeting before the Lord, "who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts," must be dreaded particularly by those who act treacherously under the cloak of friendship, who do wrong under the pretext of justice; the wolves in sheep's clothing, the whitened sepulchres so severely denounced by our Lord.

Let us try to picture this tremendous event. Terrible beyond description will be the awakening of the wicked at the last trumpet. The just will rise to a new life in perpetual youth and beauty, but the reprobate will be gathered to a life that is called in Holy Scripture "the second death," for it is worse than the first death, with all its accompanying horrors; they will live for ever that they may suffer for ever. "For death is not the worst, but it is worse, when one craves death, then not to die" (Sophocles, *Elec.* 1007).

Nothing is more loathsome than a putrid corpse, and yet the condemned soul must return to a body foul with corruption. It may struggle against its horrible fate, but all in vain. It is in all its hideousness revealed to all the world, and all shun it with loathing. The wicked, having sown in the flesh, shall of the flesh also reap corruption, but the just, having sown in the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting, for they have crucified the flesh with the lusts thereof. It is impossible to imagine a more fearful state than to linger alive with a body already rotting. Yet their bodily wretchedness is nothing compared to the shame felt by the wicked.

At its particular judgment the soul of the godless realizes for the first time how God has always known it, and seen it in all its naked ugliness. Then it had to acknowledge that it squandered God's precious gifts, was false to Christ, and disloyal to the Holy Ghost. Yet its infamy was not yet published abroad, it was as yet known only to God and to the lost in hell. On earth perchance friends and comrades still remembered that soul with respect and affection; a fine tombstone, set over the dead man's body, commemorated his virtues and merits; he may have attained to the earthly immortality he so eagerly coveted, and he may have lived on in men's memory as long as the world

lasted. But now, at the General Judgment, the last shreds of his good repute will be torn from him; the godless man will be recognized as a fool and a knave, and exposed to the disdain and horror of the just and to the ridicule and insults of his unhappy fellow sufferers. He will have to drain to the dregs the cup of humiliation. His outward appearance marks him as God's enemy, and all his base and evil deeds are now plain to view. A criminal condemned to death awaits the coming of the executioner with far less terror than the sinner, already condemned to everlasting death, awaits the second advent of our Lord. The ungodly "shall have no hope, nor speech of comfort in the day of trial" (Wisd. iii. 18).

> Woe to you, ye spirits dark;
> Hope never ye to see Heaven's heritage:
> I come to take you to the other coast,
> Eternal gloom, and heat, and winter's rage.
>
> DANTE, *Hell*, III, 85.

The Cross, the sign of the Son of Man, will appear in the heavens, and the elect will welcome it with joy as the standard under which they, like their Redeemer, have overcome all their enemies. But the ungodly will shudder and cry out with fear; once the cross was to them also a token of grace and salvation, of hope and consolation, but now they behold it with awe and despair. The cross, which they insulted and blasphemed, is the justification of their sentence; and Satan will tell them in terrifying mockery that they have forsaken God, their best Friend, to become the slaves of their worst enemy.

And on high will appear the Son of God, in all His adorable power, dignity, and majesty, in dazzling splendor, and surrounded by the heavenly host. The joy of the blessed will know no bounds, for then for the first time they behold with their bodily eyes their divine Saviour in His glorified manhood. He welcomes them as the blessed of His Father, while the wicked are filled with fresh terror, because to them the sight of His majesty is unendurable; "they also that pierced Him shall see Him." They cannot escape, but must stay to hear their doom. Christ will at once proceed to separate the sheep from the goats, and set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on His left. To the wicked a place is allotted among the devils, they are lost, and no hope remains to them; for there is nothing secret that

shall not be revealed, nor hidden that shall not be known. The veil of hypocrisy will be torn off, for God "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts"; "Behold, I come against thee, saith the Lord, and I will discover thy shame to thy face, and will show thy nakedness to the nations" (Nahum iii. 5). "I will lay upon thee all thy crimes" (Ezech. vii. 8).

When God Himself, who sees and knows everything, bears testimony, no proof is required, no denial possible. The world perceives at best only a man's outward actions, and an earthly tribunal takes cognizance only of deeds against the law, but God's eye penetrates the deepest darkness, and searches out all our evil deeds together with their hidden and complex motives. All will be laid bare, that everyone may read our bad intentions, our falsehood and treachery, all our disgraceful desires and resolutions, all our disloyalty, love of vengeance, and hatred. At such a tribunal there can be no defence, no excuses. In this world there are often circumstances that palliate the culprit's guilt, both in his own eyes and in those of others. He pleads that he is by nature weak and bad-tempered, that he was placed in corrupt surroundings and under evil influences; and thus he may succeed in silencing his own conscience and in deceiving his critics. He blinds himself to his own sins and finally is hardly aware of them, for he anxiously avoids self-examination, turns a deaf ear to the voice of conscience, maintains an outward show of respectability, resents criticism, and feels insulted if ever his righteousness is called in question. The worst scoundrel is not seldom the most accomplished liar and hypocrite, and although he may boast of certain vices, he never reveals his whole wickedness to his companions. This strange reserve is due to his fear of public disgrace. He defies God and His law, but shrinks from the condemnation of men. At the last day, however, there can be no further concealment, and he can no longer deceive himself or others. On earth it was disagreeable to him to think of his sins, painful to be reminded of them, and impossible to appreciate their full malice and enormity. At the General Judgment all mankind will behold his sins and vices in all their ugliness.

What overwhelms him with deepest shame is the fact that he himself is forced to appear against himself as accuser, witness,

and judge. Formerly, when God's voice through his conscience denounced his infamy, he would stifle it, and succeeded so well that it was heard at last but seldom and very faintly. Now the hour has come for conscience to take revenge for the violence done to it. Like a savage beast, long kept in confinement, it recovers its liberty, and forces the culprit into the agonizing cry: *mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa.* These words were once the expression of hope and relief to a penitent heart; now they are uttered by one self-tortured and despairing, who recognizes the justice of his sentence, and knows that from it there is no appeal.

The Judge, upon the throne of His glory, will finally turn towards those assembled at His left hand; His eyes, that so recently rested with indescribable love and joy upon His faithful followers, now flash with wrath as He cries: "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire. . . . I know you not," I recognize you no more as My brethren, children of the same Father. You were created in My likeness, but you have disfigured it. I suffered unspeakable agony and even a shameful death on the cross for you, but you despised Me. At your baptism you were incorporated into My mystical body, and made living branches of Me, the vine; you were bedewed with My grace so that your hearts might be a fruitful garden, gay with flowers; but you despised all My gifts and benefits. You were enrolled in My army, and you deserted My banner, and as traitors went over to the enemy. Whenever you called to Me for pardon of your sins, I welcomed you, and washed you anew in My blood, but each time you were false to Me. I invited you to My table, and you behaved as Judas did. Like a father, I waited with longing for your return to Me; like the good Shepherd, I sought you, My lost sheep, but you would not come to Me. Even on the verge of the abyss I still called and warned you, but you would not listen to My words, and refused to grasp the hand that I held out to you. "What is there that I ought to do more to my vineyard, that I have not done to it? I looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it hath brought forth wild grapes" (Is. v. 4). "How often would I have gathered you together, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and ye would not" (Matth. xxiii. 37). I dwelt among you, and you knew Me not; I was poor, suffering hunger

and thirst, was homeless and wretched, but you felt no pity for Me. My enemy and yours has done nothing for you, yet you have chosen him in preference to Me, therefore I make you over to him. Depart into the everlasting fire, which was prepared for him and his followers. Go to the place where there is no joy and no consolation, but only unending torture. All the bonds of love uniting you with Me are severed, and henceforth you will see My face no more.

This is the climax of wretchedness, to have lost God, and with Him all hope and happiness; nothing remains but despair.

On the other hand the saved are preparing for their entrance into the heavenly Jerusalem, having heard the invitation, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," and they raise the strain of glad thanksgiving, in which even the brute creation joins: "Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb" (Apoc. vii. 10). Amongst this happy throng the lost behold many whom they have known in life, friends and relatives, even companions in sin who have turned to God with true repentance and have found grace before they died. What torture does not this sight cause to those who are now cast off for ever; they are filled with envy of the saved and with furious anger against themselves. They perceive their own folly, and seeking death, they shall not find it; they desire to die, and death shall fly from them (Apoc. ix. 6).

After the hosts of the blessed have been admitted to heaven the lost will see the jaws of hell yawn wide open to receive them. Dante speaks of the inscription over the entrance to hell:

"Through me men pass to city of great woe;
Through me men pass to endless misery;
Through me men pass where all the lost ones go.
Ye that pass in, all hope abandon ye.

Hell. III, 1.

As the wicked are hurled down into its depths they cry out in despair: Farewell, thou Paradise of bliss, home of peace and glorious city of God. We, who were born to dwell in thee, are now by our own fault cast into the abode of darkness and misery. Farewell, Thou God of justice, mercy and goodness, we are no longer Thy children, but outcasts, by our own fault driven forth from Thy presence. Farewell, Thou Son of God;

we are no more Thy brethren, though for us Thou didst die, by our own fault Thy sacrifice was all in vain. Farewell, Thou Spirit of love and grace; by our own fault we have made Thee cease to love us. Farewell, blessed Mother Mary, to us thou art not a refuge, nor an intercessor, but it is our own fault. Farewell, ye holy angels, especially our guardians, henceforth by our own fault we are cut off from you. Farewell ye saints, no more can you intercede for us. . . . Farewell all that is dear to human hearts; we have lost all and everything, and by our own fault nothing is left us but eternal woe and despair. "Just art Thou, O Lord, and just are Thy judgments."

. . .

The elect to their unspeakable rapture are carried up on high, there to remain until the world has been purged by fire, when they will return to rule over a new earth, i.e., an earth glorified and perfected, "in which justice dwelleth." They witness, it is true, the doom of the wicked, but this causes them no sorrow, even though in life they may have been closely associated with them. The blessed are free from all pain, and consequently feel no regret, because where God sets a limit to His mercy, there does their compassion end. Our natural affections have an undoubted right to permanence, but only in as far as this is compatible with the conditions of the other life. They will be for ever confirmed or annulled by the sentence of the divine Judge, and confirmation and severance alike tend to the happiness of the saved, who rejoice at beholding God's justice. They are so intimately connected with Him that they can have nothing in common with those whom He has rejected. Final impenitence creates a gulf that cannot be bridged by the bonds of kindred or friendship.

The holy Queen Blanche of France said to her son, King Louis, "My son, I would rather know you dead than guilty of mortal sin." If a woman on earth could speak thus, we can understand that a soul in glory feels neither love nor sympathy for those who spurn and hate what is to it the supreme Good, and who by their own guilt have cut themselves off from God and all His children for ever.

The blessed share God's horror of sin, but their horror of

it does not disturb their happiness. They, however, feel no hatred, nor do they rejoice over the sorrows of the lost. Of God it is said: "Thou lovest all things that are, and hatest none of the things which Thou hast made," and in the same way we may say of the blessed that they cannot actually hate. The feeling of hatred is bitter and disturbing and unworthy of the saints, who rejoice in the doom of the ungodly only because God's justice has triumphed. This is the sense in which the Psalmist extols the Lord's judgments. In a certain manner the saints may be said still to love the wicked, because they, too, are God's creatures, though corrupt and therefore rejected by Him. Some of the Fathers and theologians of the Church fancy that the sufferings of the damned will to some extent be alleviated through Christ's precious Blood. But they lack the alleviation which the holy souls in Purgatory find in their resignation to God's holy will. Their whole nature is changed into evil, hatred, and enmity against God, and because they are permanently hardened in sin, everlasting damnation is their natural state. They would feel more wretched in heaven than in hell; the brightness of heaven would to them be more unendurable than the fires of hell that rage within them. As they clearly understand that they are irrevocably rejected by God, they cannot even will a release from the fire that torments them, and they hate God, not because He is the highest Good, but because of His terrible justice and vengeance that they must now experience.

We sometimes hear the Church accused of having falsified Christ's holy religion, by depicting our loving Father in heaven as an unmerciful Judge and a creditor who exacts the uttermost farthing from His debtors. It was, however, not the Church, but her divine Founder, who taught us what we know of hell, and threatened us with it. Freethinkers cannot forgive Him for having thus offended against what they conceive as tolerance. "Jesus believes in hell; He is gratified by His belief: Away with hell!" cries out in an outburst of fury the famous authoress, Georges Sand.

CHAPTER XII

THE GLORIFIED BODY

O bliss, O joy, no mortal may express!
O life filled full with love and peace, good store!
O riches, free from selfish eagerness!

DANTE, *Paradise,* XXVII, 8.

JUST as the apostles at the Transfiguration at once recognized Moses and Elias, so will every soul at the last day recognize not only its own body, but the bodies also of all the members of the human race.

Each soul will return to its previous body, for it would be unfair that one body should labor and another receive the reward. Because Christ rose from the dead in the flower of His manhood, and as His body is the type of all risen bodies, many of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church are inclined to believe that our risen bodies also will be in the condition corresponding to the meridian of life. It does not follow that we shall all be alike in appearance; each will retain the outward characteristics that distinguish him from others.

What indescribable rejoicing will take place when those who have loved one another on earth meet again, after a separation of perhaps many years' duration, when, for the first time, they behold each other in their glorified bodies, and can once more gaze into each other's eyes as of old! The mere thought of the intense happiness of this reunion is enough to arouse feelings of long-forgotten happiness in the heart of a mourner. We shall meet again in the state of glory, and the centuries-old cry of mankind for deliverance will be silenced forever and for aye.

The choicest products of nature and skill for the preservation or restoration of bodily health, strength, and beauty, have only a temporary effect; soon their effect wears off. Each day brings its fresh burdens and annoyances of many kinds; hunger and thirst, heat and cold impair our strength, our senses lose their keenness, and even in the absence of sickness or accident, senile

decay would end our lives, and this is the natural course in bodies formed from dust.

Since nature will not be annihilated but completed and perfected by grace and glory, the bodies of the Blessed will rise complete and perfect from the grave, leaving there the weaknesses and defects due to sin. Consequently man will rise in all his natural perfection, a masterpiece that would entrance an artist, and will far surpass all the most exquisite productions of brush and chisel. Anything that might detract from the beauty of the bodies of the saints will have disappeared; there will be no deficiency, no superfluity, no wrinkles, no disfigurement. St. Augustine tells us that there will be no imperfection in these bodies, and ravages of time or disease will be eradicated by Christ's divine power, for He will restore to us all that which sin has taken away. The same saint jocosely assures those who are excessively lean or corpulent that they need not worry about being bothered with such defects in the other life. Bodily beauty consists in symmetry and in mellow tints; and after the resurrection there will be no more disharmony or ugliness. An artist knows how to produce a new and faultless statue from the material of one that has been a failure, what, then, may be expected from the greatest Artist of all?

Hence the martyrs will appear with bodies whole and restored, and the blind, the lame, and deformed will rise free from any imperfection, for otherwise, as the Roman Catechism declares, the soul's desire for reunion with the body would not be gratified, and yet we believe firmly that this desire will be fulfilled at the resurrection.

We must, however, avoid, on the one hand, the sensual idea that Mahometans hold of the risen body, and, on the other, the opinion that this body is so completely spiritualized as to lack what is essential to human nature. Man will rise whole and incorrupt, but he will have laid aside all that which is inconsistent with the new life.

It is true that even in death the soul retains all the faculties given to it by God for being the essential element, the vivifying and motive force of the body. But those faculties which are not required by the glorified body and for the purposes of the higher life will lie dormant. To this class belong such as are designed for the preservation of the individual and the propaga-

tion of the race; they are not needed when the number of the elect is full, and each of them is clothed in the robe of incorruption. In this glorious company there will be no eating or drinking, nor marrying or giving in marriage.

The soul will be active through all the senses, yet in exercising its activity it will hold aloof from the body all impressions incompatible with its immunity from corruption and suffering. There can be no material injury, no interruption of vital activity, and no discord in the sensitive life. The soul will allow no influences from outside to affect the body, except such as tend to its welfare.

The body, therefore, will in all its members and senses share eternal happiness; it served the spirit in the work of glorifying God, and therefore will participate in the joys of heaven.

This bodily happiness, that according to the natural order renders the life of the blessed perfect, receives its crowning glory through an absolute harmony between body and soul.

The life of the soul is to know and to love; it accomplishes these tasks, not as a pure spirit, but as the occupant of a body with which it is united so as to form one nature. Hence it is subject to laws governing the bodily organism, and even in spiritual matters, that strictly constitute its own domain, it is dependent upon the co-operation of the nerves and senses. To some extent this is an imperfection of nature, and more so a result of sin; it is the source of innumerable frailties and of many great evils. "The corruptible body is a load upon the soul, and the earthly habitation presseth down the mind" (Wisd. ix. 15).

Sense impressions set the nervous system in action, and the organs and forces controlled by it are immediately affected; and it often happens that reason, instead of holding its servant in check, is itself enslaved and defied by the body. A great effort is necessary before the will can master the emotions and govern the passions.

It is not right for mind to be dependent upon matter, hence such a relation cannot exist in the other life, where all is in a state of perfection, where evil passions are unknown and perverse desires destroyed. Moreover, the bodies of the just receive other gifts and faculties, so that they are raised to a higher stage of being, far excelling that of our first parents in Paradise.

The body, as well as the soul, is equipped afresh for its new life.

Our destiny is to resemble Christ and be united with Him, in this life by grace, and in the next by glory. God's likeness is impressed chiefly upon the soul, but it sheds its radiance over the body also, because the soul is reflected in it. The more brightly God's image shines in the soul, the more is the body uplifted to the spiritual life, and the more readily does it submit to the loving designs of God's will. Because man as a whole, and not the soul alone, is called to a supernatural end, he must also, as a whole, receive the qualifications and aptitudes required for his new condition, and just as the soul is rendered more perfect, so as to be fit for the most intimate union with its God in the glories of heaven, so must the body receive fresh powers, because it is united with the soul in glory.

St. Thomas explains very clearly what is meant by the soul's dowry. He says that the Church, and every soul truly belonging to it, is here on earth the bride of Christ, continually receiving most gracious tokens of His love. These gifts, however, are not the actual dowry, which consists rather in the treasures that the bride brings with her to the bridegroom's dwelling. As long as the soul inhabits a mortal body it is a pilgrim far distant from its Lord; with a burning lamp in its hand it awaits its divine Spouse, who will come unawares to lead it to the heavenly banquet. It has already received from Him the marriage garment, but its special wedding gifts are bestowed upon it by God at the glorious nuptials; they are intended to make it worthy of her Bridegroom, and capable of intimate union with Him. This dowry benefits Him, because it is given for His sake, for His honor and glory; but otherwise, like an earthly dowry, it continues to be the bride's property.

The corporal dowry is a spiritualization of the risen body, for just as the soul participates in God's life and happiness, so does the body participate in the soul's life and happiness without, however, being changed into another substance. It resembles the soul and becomes perfectly subservient to it, in other words it is spiritualized and glorified; for only thus can it be a fit companion for a spirit wholly merged in the life and being of the infinite Spirit; only thus can it share the glory of the soul.

St. Paul describes the body's dowry in the following words: "It is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it shall rise in glory; it is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power; it is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body" (1 Cor. xv. 42–44).

In addition to the three characteristics common to the risen bodies of the Just and the Wicked, namely, identity, entirety, and immortality, the bodies of the saints will, according to the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, be distinguished by four transcendent qualities, viz., *impassibility,* which shall place them beyond the reach of pain and inconvenience; *brightness,* or *glory,* by which the bodies of the saints shall shine like the sun; *agility,* the capability of the body to move with the utmost facility and quickness wherever the soul pleases; *subtility,* by which the body becomes subject to the absolute dominion of the soul (*Catholic Encyclopedia*).

Such, then, is the glorious change that our mortal bodies will undergo. No imagination can picture, no tongue can describe, all that is comprised in the one word "glorified." Our bodies will be still true human bodies in appearance, essence, and activity, but in all these respects they will be so transformed that no image and no comparison can give us any idea of their future glory.

The chief characteristic bestowed on all risen bodies without exception is *immortality.* "Christ, rising again from the dead, dieth now no more," and in the same way those who by His might have been raised are no longer liable to death; that which is mortal is swallowed up by life, and death shall be no more. Our first parents in Paradise possessed immortality, but could be deprived of it, whereas that privilege will be ours for ever. St. Augustine thinks that the bodies of Adam and Eve were naturally mortal, but by God's special favor they would have been transported from a state of mortality to one of immortality without the intervention of death, provided they had not sinned. For just as our bodies now do not cease to be vulnerable when they are not actually injured, so they did not cease to be mortal when it was not necessary for them to die. It is one thing not to be forced to die, and another thing to be so constituted as to be incapable of death.

That our bodies after the resurrection will be released not

merely from the necessity, but also from the possibility of death, follows from the fact that, as St. Paul says, they have put on incorruption, and this precious gift was denied to our first parents, whose bodies were subject to a perpetual rotation of waste and repair, like our own bodies, which are completely renewed every six or seven years. The soul is destined and capable to unite so intimately with matter as to give it the life and being of a human body, and to preserve it as such for a time, but its authority over the body does not avail to prevent changes and decay; and when at length it becomes unfit to be its dwelling the soul has to leave it. This would have been our first parents' lot even in the state of innocence, had not God by a peculiar favor supplied them with the fruit of the tree of life, which enabled them to preserve their bodies intact, in spite of its constant changes. Thus immortality was not inherent in them, but was produced by external causes. The power, however, that Adam's soul lacked will belong some day to ours, and after the reunion of soul and body, the former will dominate the latter in all its organs and members, so that decay and change will be quite impossible.

The risen body will not need food or drink, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink" (Rom. xiv. 17), and when our Lord speaks of eating and drinking at His table, this is not to be understood as a continuation of earthly feasts in the other life, which we must not, like the Mahometans, imagine to be an existence of refined sensuality. Christ, indeed, ate and drank after His resurrection, not because He needed nourishment, but to convince His followers that His body had truly risen from the dead.

The first of the special qualities bestowed on the glorified body is *impassibility,* meaning immunity from suffering.

The body of a glorified soul, therefore, will be incapable not only of death and corruption, but also of suffering. And for this there will be no need of external means to deaden the senses, since the soul will control all impressions so that they produce nothing but a sense of comfort. The bodies of the just can feel no inconvenience or pain; neither frost, fire, nor floods can injure them (*Roman Catechism*).

In this respect again our first parents were far less fortunate, since they required outward protection against pain. This was

supplied by God, who watched over them continually, and gave His angels charge to guard them even from dashing their feet against a stone. Moreover, they were endowed with higher knowledge than we are, so that they could more readily perceive and avoid dangers. But the bodies of the saints will possess in themselves the power to avoid without difficulty all that might cause them pain; they will for ever be invulnerable, incapable of any kind of discomfort or sickness; they will feel nothing but joy and pleasure. St. Ephrem bids his brethren weep and pray that God may give them happiness in His kingdom, that realm of immortal life "where there is no pain, no mourning, and no sorrow, where no one weeps or does penance, fears or trembles; where there is no death, no corruption, no foes or adversaries, no disobedience or wrath, no hatred or enmity, but only gladness and exultation at that abundant and spiritual feast that God has prepared for them that love Him."

Almighty God will work these miracles, just as He preserved the three youths in the fiery furnace, St. John in the cauldron of boiling oil, and made many martyrs insensible to the tortures inflicted upon them. This world is like a vast infirmary, and we are all patients in it, suffering in one way or another. Every day the death angel comes and brings to thousands the brief for their discharge, and they depart. How can we mourn if our fellow sufferers are for ever cured? They have only gone before us, and we shall soon follow them.

The second quality of the risen body is *brightness:* "It is sown in dishonor, it shall rise in glory." By means of this wonderful gift it is rendered perfect, shining, and beautiful, yet retaining its outward form and appearance. It is thenceforth free from every disfigurement, and from anything that could cause aversion. It no longer needs clothing as covering or as protection against heat and cold. God made garments of skins for Adam and Eve after the fall, but for His children, whom He has reinstated in grace and raised to glory, He will prepare robes of radiant light, such as are worn by His only begotten Son. In order to live with men and suffer for their sake our Saviour laid aside His glory when He became Man, and only once allowed His disciples to see His face shining as the sun, and His garments white as snow. He went back to His Father's house to prepare an abode for us, and He will re-

turn thence in great power and majesty to fetch those who are His, that they may share His glory. "He will reform the body of our lowness, made like to the body of His glory."

The *Roman Catechism* defines brightness as a radiance proceeding from the supreme happiness of the soul and overflowing on to the body. The soul is happy because it shares in God's happiness, and it communicates its joy to the body. We read that when Moses had conversed with God, his face shone so that the children of Israel were unable to look at him. This was a foreshadowing of glory, but hereafter not only the face but the whole body of every just man shall shine as the sun, or as the brightness of the firmament.

Light is the climax of all earthly beauty; it will give splendor to the body, and it is chiefly in this radiant splendor that the gift of brightness consists. St. Cyril of Jerusalem writes that God, foreseeing men's unbelief, gave to the little glow-worm a radiance intended to show us what we might expect, for He who could give to a worm the power to emit light, can certainly bestow the same power on His elect.

What a marvellous world, full of exquisite light, is revealed to the mind enlightened by Christian faith! The bodies of the just will shine as the sun, and as the stars of the firmament, and their flood of light we cannot imagine. According to Secchi's calculation Sirius possesses a brilliancy sixty-three times as great as the sun. The blessed will not all be equally resplendent, for "one is the glory of the sun, another the glory of the moon, and another the glory of the stars; for star differeth from star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead" (1 Cor. xv. 41).

Special glory will be given to those who have displayed great heroism in their conflict with the powers of evil; to martyrs, who endured horrible tortures; to heroic virgins and zealous preachers of the gospel. All those, however, who have fought well and suffered patiently for their Saviour's sake, will receive the crown of victory and will reign with Christ in His kingdom.

The third perfection bestowed on the glorified body will be strength or *agility;* "it is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power," "they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint." St. Thomas devotes three articles to this gift, and derives it from the absolute supremacy of the soul over the

body, which receives from the soul not only existence and life, but also movement, though this is very imperfect in our present state. In our present conditon the law of gravitation acts upon the body, and prevents its moving freely in compliance with the soul's bidding, but there will be no such impediment in the other life. St. Augustine says that he cannot understand, and therefore cannot describe, the agility of the risen body, but "this much is certain; wherever the soul wills to be, the body will be forthwith; but the soul will never desire anything unseemly for itself or for the body."

Our Saviour once walked on the water, and we read of saints, such as St. Peter of Alcantara, St. Joseph of Cupertino, and others, who were able for a time to overcome the forces of nature, especially of gravitation. But occurrences of this kind were due to the special intervention of divine power, whereas the blessed will possess this gift of agility for ever, and so will themselves be able to control the elements, not being subjected to the laws of nature. There will be a great contrast between the present and the future condition of our bodies. Now sickness and death lie in wait for the body, but then it will be able to share unimpeded in all the glorified spirit's activity.

A further addition to its perfections is *subtility,* in virtue of which it is completely subject to the soul, ready to obey every hint that it receives, as St. Paul says, "It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body." In these words the Apostle describes in general terms the glorification of the body, which at the resurrection will cease to be bound by the laws to which it was previously subject, and will become more like the soul. It will possess wonderful delicacy, refinement, and transparency, and this is regarded by the Fathers as another special endowment.

We must be careful not to fall into the ancient error of supposing that the body is wholly resolved into spirit — such a transformation would not be a resurrection. Our risen Lord said to His disciples, "Handle and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see me to have"; and Job consoled himself with the thought that in his flesh he should see God. The body is spiritualized by acquiring qualities and perfections that naturally belong to the spirit, but it does not become a spirit; on the contrary it retains its own true nature, with all that be-

longs to it, and lays aside only what is imperfect and not adapted to its new state of glory.

The gift of subtility does not deprive the body of its tangibility, solidity, and extension, but communicates to it the power of overcoming all corporal hindrances to its movements in space. Our Lord came forth out of the tomb though it remained sealed, and passed through closed doors, and in the same way the blessed will be able to disregard all obstacles. Thought is free and unfettered, and in the other life the mind will carry with it its companion, the body, and nothing will stand in the way.

Great theologians such as St. Thomas, St. Bonaventure, and Duns Scotus, have done their utmost to give us some idea of this wonderful property, but they probably realized their inability to do so sufficiently; and in spite of the progress in science since their time, we are still unable to explain it. St. Thomas and his chief followers think that a special miracle is necessary if a risen body, which still is solid and has dimensions in space, is to penetrate a solid substance; but perhaps we need not assume that God always intervenes directly, if we assume that penetrability is a permanent quality of every glorified body.

Any further discussion of this difficult topic seems beyond the scope of this work. Our bodies when glorified and incorruptible will possess the quality of subtility, but we can only dimly imagine what use they can make of it. It is enough for us humbly to believe this great mystery and to rejoice at God's power, which is able to accomplish everything not involving intrinsic contradiction.

It is harder to understand the action of grace in the domain of nature than in the domain of spirit. It is true that the life and being of spiritual substances are less comprehensible to us than the phenomena and conditions of the external world, but precisely for that reason we are less able to draw the line between what is possible and what is impossible where spirits are concerned. Moreover, for a spiritual substance, made in the image of God, the range of things naturally possible is much less restricted than for the body. In this world the understanding can attain to knowledge of outward nature and of the laws governing it only through the action of the senses, and consequently it feels so dependent upon sense perception and experience as

scarcely to be able to dispense with them; even if it tries to soar, it is dragged down by its habitual conceptions of space and of the laws governing purely natural existence. On the other hand, these latter cannot be simply applied to the higher supernatural order of the new body in the new life, and so they are not unconditionally valid. God, who laid down these laws, can rescind them partially or completely without annihilating or changing the creatures to whom they are applicable in this world, or perhaps the perfect laws governing our bodily frame will not come into force until we rise from the grave.

The most striking object-lesson showing how little a glorified body is subject to the conditions of the earthly body and life, is given us in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. The one, true Body of our Lord sits at the right hand of the Father, and yet at the same time is present in thousands of places on earth without being divided or multiplied in essence. No created spirit could naturally achieve this, but just as the soul is present everywhere in the body, so is our Lord present whole and undivided in every host, in the entire host as in each part thereof; He occupies exactly the same space that these occupy. His presence ceases when they cease to be, and He is present without manifesting Himself visibly. The Miracle of the Altar is indeed greater than that of the Last Day. The human body is destined to be not merely the abode but also the instrument of the mind, whereby the latter is to render the world of sense subservient to itself, and then in voluntary submission offer it to the Creator. Through the body the soul receives impressions of sight, hearing, taste, and feeling. All that is perceived and felt by means of the senses is only the outer husk, not the essence of the thing in itself, which is discovered, though not grasped, by the understanding. As the next world will be peculiarly the home of what is spiritual, whilst what is corporal will be brought into subjection, the real essence and fragrance of things will be cognizable by the senses of the glorified body.

Moreover, the body is not only the instrument of the mind, but also the channel of the sacramental grace that inundates the soul. It is therefore in harmony with the position occupied by the body in both orders of nature and grace, that the glory of God's image should be reflected in and through it to the outer world, and that the body should be the mirror of the soul

adorned with original justice, and a visible expression of the beauty hidden within. It was so in the beginning, and as long as this beauty remained, the body was its outward manifestation, but when the beauty vanished the body was left naked and ashamed, because it had become the pitiful likeness of a soul desecrated by sin. Outward nakedness was the necessary consequence of the loss of its glorious vesture within.

As the natural likeness to God in man has been disfigured, but not destroyed, by sin, the spirit has not lost all control over the senses; in fact it often succeeds, in a manner, imperfect indeed, but still sufficiently wonderful in subjugating matter, in inspiring even inanimate objects, such as stone and wood, with its own lofty conceptions. The sight of a really beautiful painting affords delight both to the mind and the eye; and the longer we look at the works of famous artists, the more are we carried away by the magic of their genius. The breath of life seems to pervade the tracings of the brush on the unfeeling canvas, and from the eyes and lips of the face depicted a soul seems to attempt a revelation of all that it feels. We listen for words, as if we might hear its utterance, forgetting that we are only looking at the more or less successful representation of an ideal conceived in the mind of the artist. How much more should we see if we could peer into this mind itself and watch the working of the genius!

May there not be some such insight and mutual self-revelation in the association of the Blessed?

Already in this life the soul's innocence and love are betrayed by the eyes, and its dignity and worth are impressed upon the outward appearance, so that children and saints have a wonderful power to attract. Language also contains a spiritual element under a physical expression, and it is the highest spiritualization of matter. But, like everything corporeal in comparison with the spiritual, words are harsh and clumsy, and inadequate to express ideas in all their fullness and force. Whoever is inspired with a great thought, or seized by the power of a spiritual emotion, has to struggle with language for its expression, and must resort to gesticulation and play of feature. But will not all this be unnecessary hereafter, when the body allows the soul's light to pass through it, so as to manifest the inner working of the mind? Every sound there will be musical,

and all speech a heavenly melody, echoing the pure harmony of hearts united to one another in God.

If we, then, recall, with all the confidence and assurance that our faith inspires, the splendors in store for our bodies, we shall no longer be alarmed or saddened by the prospect of the grave.

St. John Chrysostom says: "One who intends to renovate an old, ruinous house orders the occupants to move out, demolishes the structure, and builds a better one. Those who were obliged to remove, rejoice rather than grieve over this, for they think nothing of the destruction that they behold, but look forward to the new beautiful building, that they cannot yet see. And this is the way God acts; He destroys our body and orders its tenant to quit, in order that He may rebuild the house more beautifully, and then bring back the soul to it with increased splendor. Therefore we ought to fix our eyes, not upon the present destruction, but upon the future renewal. — I will give you another parable: Suppose some one has a metal image, much impaired by usage and age; he will break it up and cast it into a furnace, so that it may be melted down and then made into another even more beautiful figure. When it is melted in the furnace, it is not destroyed, but renewed; and in the same way the death of the body is not its destruction, but its renewal. If you see our bodies in dissolution like metal in a furnace, do not think that this is the end, but look forward to their restoration. Yet this parable is not quite satisfactory. One who melts down a figure of iron does not get from it in return a living, golden statue, but at best another of iron. It is not so with God; He destroys our perishable bodies of clay and gives us in return bodies that are glorious, immortal, golden as it were. A mortal and perishable body is laid in the earth, and an immortal and imperishable one rises from the grave. Fix not your sight on that one which lies silent and dead, but on that which rises again to unspeakable and wonderful glory. Turn your thoughts from the present spectacle to hope of the future."

Even now the eyes of faith see the first faint dawn of a magnificent resurrection, even now the ear of faith seems to catch the songs of the angels and to hear the mighty voice of the Judge summoning all who sleep in death to arise to a new and bright life. The soul awaits its former companion, that it may infuse fresh life into it and take it along to the blessed abode of

the heavenly Paradise, there to dwell in inseparable union with it, and to be for ever happy in God's presence, in the company of all the angels and saints. This is an emancipation of the body, totally unlike that which the flesh craves for in its lust, or as the godless world offers in its sensual delights. Just as the spirit's true liberty and joy consist in the service of God, so do those of the body consist in the service of the spirit; the soul grows more like God, and the body more like the soul.

Rejoice, therefore, thou frail and sickly body; I say that for thee also will strike the hour of release and glory. In order to prolong thy days, and with them thy sorrows upon earth, thou sufferest privations, thou makest sacrifices, and undergoest even painful and hazardous operations. Complain not if the Great Physician cometh and layeth hand on thee, to make thee fit for a new life. Even He will not heal thee without demanding payment, a demand which is not so easily discharged as that of the physician in this life. The doctor by profession careth not whether thou art patient in thy sufferings, but such patience and resignation to the Divine Will is the only fee that will be acceptable to the heavenly Physician.

Rejoice, ye dead, dear remains of those whom we loved on earth, the Lord's hand will renew you; though with grief and horror we witnessed your last struggles, and turned from your sight in the grave, we know that yours will be a glorious lot in the life which lies before you.

CHAPTER XIII

THE ABODE OF THE BLESSED

WHERE shall we meet again? We are told that heaven is to be our home, but where is heaven? Cicero tells us that the ancients believed the virtuous to inhabit the Milky Way; the Manichaeans thought that they were sent first to the moon, and afterwards to the sun. Some of the earlier Fathers speak of a shelter for souls, without defining it further; others, and with them most of the mediaeval and modern theologians, on the strength of St. Paul's being carried up to the third heaven, consider the abode of God and the saints to be in the Empyrean, that contains, as they supposed, all the celestial spheres. Holy Scripture tells us very little on the subject, nor has the Church decided anything. The most satisfactory interpretation seems to be that "the third heaven" must be taken in a spiritual sense, as denoting the height and perfection of our knowledge of God, not any new sojourning place. In opposition to the results obtained by astrophysics, which by means of spectrum analysis has discovered in the stars the same elements as those which constitute our earth, it is the opinion of commentators that "the third heaven" is a region of already glorified celestial bodies, and identical with the "many dwellings in the Father's house," where the angels and saints abide.

The chief point to keep in view is that the difference between this life and the next is less a matter of locality than of condition, although we involuntarily apply the idea of dimension and space to the conditions of the other life. If we picture the other world as separated from this by a fixed barrier, and the disembodied soul as inhabiting a definite place, we are transferring the conditions of our present existence to what is supernatural. In death the soul shakes off its earthy fetters and frees itself from the laws of space; it is superior to them in the sense that, without an explicit order from God, it cannot thenceforth be

shut up in any limited spot, nor excluded from it; although, of course, it cannot be everywhere at once, but can be present only in some one particular locality, and may, as a punishment, be confined to one place. This punishment is imposed upon the wicked on account of their evil lives, whereas the blessed are free to go where they will. Hence the world of spirits does not begin where the world of sense ends, but the former dominates the latter without coming into conflict with it. When, therefore, persons who ridicule religion tell us that there cannot possibly be room enough in the next world for all the vast multitude of human souls, they can hardly expect to be taken seriously.

Death is not so much a flitting of the soul, but rather its settling down in the innermost depths of its being, and the Beatific Vision most not be considered as something external. God does not approach the soul as separated from it in space, but He fills and penetrates its inmost being, so that the enrapturing and the enraptured spirit become inseparably united.

God being everywhere is present with all creatures, He is "not far from every one of us, for in Him we live and move and are" (Acts xvii. 27). He is, however, present to embodied souls in one way, and to disembodied in another; nor is He with the damned in the same sense as with the saved. Whilst we are on earth He is our goal, our guide, and the object of our faith, hope, and love; but to the perfect He is the object of their contemplation and the possession of their love. To the holy souls in purgatory He is near as the goal they are sure to reach, the object of their most ardent and loving desires; whilst to the reprobate He is a goal irretrievably lost, and for ever unattainable, the object at once of their passionate longing and hatred.

The souls of the just, being clothed again with their bodies on the last day, will, owing to their agility and subtility, be less fettered to locality than they were on earth, but still they will stand in greater relation to it than they did in the bodiless state. When, therefore, we think of heaven, where, after the General Judgment, all the just will gather for all eternity, we must admit some idea of place. Heaven is not merely a state, but also a place of happiness, the abode of all God's saints, who now, being complete in number and perfect in nature, will gather around their Lord. But where are we to look for this place? Is the heaven of the saints identical with the firmament? What celes-

tial body has been chosen to be *in a special sense* God's dwelling among men? The words "in a special sense" are meant as a safeguard against the erroneous idea that the blessed might be unable to move as freely about the universe as their agility will warrant, if heaven were a particular place and circumscribed in space.

Holy Scripture speaks of heaven as being above the earth. but this is merely a concession to our ordinary mode of thought, and we cannot base any theory upon such vague statements; so we must have recourse exclusively to theology. St. John writes: "I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth was gone, and the sea is now no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice from the throne, saying, "Behold the tabernacle of God with men, and he will dwell with them; and they shall be his people, and God Himself with them shall be their God" (Apoc. xxi. 1–3). If the heavenly Jerusalem with God's throne comes down to earth, and God sets up His tabernacle there, in order to dwell with His people, then heaven and earth are not, in the theological sense, to be thought of as distinct from one another, and our earth must be regarded as the future abode of the blessed. The descent of the heavenly city "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" denotes the passing of the blessed from their present state of happiness to that of perfect glory, which will begin on the last day. After the body, too, has received its share in the eternal reward, the whole man will be in perfect bliss. Heaven will be every place where soul and body can be happy, or, in other words, wherever Christ is present in His human nature. But the earth will be the place where by preference the Head of the Church Triumphant will erect His tabernacle, and gather the company of the blessed about Him.

St. John's wonderful vision indicates in general terms the relationship that once existed between the saved and Mother Earth, a bond not severed but only purified by the glorification of the body. The vision is, moreover, quite in keeping with the relation in which the saints stood to this world during their time of probation and merit. In their bodily though spiritualized nature they still belong to earth, because the qualities be-

stowed upon this nature has not made it cease to be earthly. The body was made of and returned to earth, having during life subsisted on its products. All Adam's descendants must, on the lower side of their being, acknowledge the earth as their common mother, and it is to some extent a constituent of human nature. From this point of view, then, we may regard the earth as the material and extended body of the spiritual part of man.

The material world, thus destined to enter into the closest union with man, cannot attain its final end without man's aid. The world exists, not for itself, but for man, whose servant and property it is, and alone in association with him can it accomplish its higher destiny. The earth, however, is for its inhabitants the representative and medium of the visible universe. The saints retain their interest in this world, and do not forget that they were pilgrims here before they entered heaven. Here they labored for God and His glory, and here they will receive their full reward; here they suffered, fought, and overcame, and here they will bear the palm of victory. The earth, that witnessed their sorrows and struggles, will at the last day witness also their glorious triumph. But can it please them to be on earth where they underwent so much tribulation? Can they feel at home in a world defiled and desecrated by countless evil deeds of every kind?

First of all we must notice that harassing and disastrous natural events are of great value for the moral instruction and discipline of the human race, and often prove to be efficacious means, devised by God, for chastising and reforming mankind. Moreover, nature is designed to make us realize not only the goodness and love of the Creator, but also His justice and severity, and hence the catastrophes of nature form part of His course of training us. It is good for us to perceive everywhere the action of His gentle hand, but sometimes it is expedient also to be reminded of our sins and the need of penance. The wonderful harmony between justice and love which characterizes all God's works is seen also in the great work of nature. There can be no doubt, therefore, that the saints look gratefully back upon the blows as well as upon the benefits which they received at the hand of nature, seeing in both alike the tokens of their heavenly Father's care. All temptations to discontent and mistrust are over, and the natural order is seen to have been a

school, in which not only fair rewards but also painful punishments were given to the pupils, since divine Providence finds correction indispensable in the task of teaching and training mankind.

These considerations enable us to see why the saints are interested in the world, even in its present shortcomings, and why they look back to it with affection, but we see also why they cannot desire it in its present condition to be their permanent abode. Once for all they have left their earthly school with diplomas certifying their fitness for heaven; they have reached their goal and need no further discipline. Hence the earth, as it now is, cannot seem to them a pleasant and attractive abode. They are God's favorites, the objects of His good pleasure; in them His sanctity finds no longer matter for blame, nor His justice cause for punishment. Therefore a world, to be a suitable place for saints, must be a Paradise, exempt from calamities which would be unwarranted when God could no longer have the chastisement and correction of man in view.

Collectively the gloriously risen represent ideal humanity, and individually each of them is the ideal man, and in order that perfect harmony may exist in the new creation, their abode and surroundings must correspond to their state of bliss and glory. Their bodies are now immune from pain and suffering; heat and cold, thunder and lightning cannot affect them, but, nevertheless, the ideal harmony of creation would be disturbed if God's glorified children had to take up their abode for ever in an imperfect world. The earth, as it now is, would not be good enough for them, because they are to be screened from all that could impair their perfect happiness. Hence, if this world is to be their home, it must first become heaven, i.e., the perfect realization of God's idea at the creation — and such is far from being the case at present. The eye of the thoughtful student of nature discovers everywhere and in all things, both great and small, the traces of God's wonderful power. The book of nature is open to all, but it contains some obscure hieroglyphics, and neither the ignorance of those not able to read, nor the indolence or folly of others who refuse to read aright, are exclusively answerable for the fact that these hieroglyphics have not yet been deciphered. I am not referring to problems arising out of the phenomena of natural life, nor to the forces

and laws still undiscovered, nor to the innumerable deficiencies in our scientific knowledge, but rather to the difficulties which nature presents to us when we attempt to vindicate the justice of God.

In nature we perceive beautiful order and variety, but the pleasing impression, produced by this harmony, is frequently disturbed. Everything, every creature occupies its proper place, and one must minister to another, often at the cost of its own life. Poisonous plants and harmful animals may be found to serve a valuable and beneficial purpose, but still they continue to be injurious in many other ways. Every year nature distributes its gifts, but on some it bestows abundance, whilst others die of hunger.

Nature is God's book, but it contains much that is obscure to us; it is His likeness, but not an adequate reproduction of His loving face; it is His reflection, but dim and clouded; it shows us God, but only through a veil. Hence it is that a realistic interpretation of nature makes us feel that something is lacking; only an idealized conception can satisfy us. Discord and unrest prevail in nature; it sheds abroad trouble and alarm, poverty and sorrow, and bears the impress of pain, death, and decay; in short, it shows that it is impaired and suffering. The optimism of certain philosophers is daily proved false by the outcry raised by men against the hostility of nature, yet narrow pessimism is equally unwarranted. That there are evils in nature cannot be denied, but we must not look upon them as evidence of any lack of wisdom, goodness, and power in God. They are not sufficient to justify the Manichaean belief in the existence of some inexplicable principle of evil, nor vindicate John Stuart Mill's idea that the Creator of nature battles with an eternal and unyielding matter.

The theological principle which reconciles the evil in nature with the doctrine that God made everything good must be the starting-point of our further discussions. Following the example of the Fathers, most theologians speak of the curse resting on nature. Nature no longer displays God's original handwriting; it is in many places a palimpsest, a *codex rescriptus,* because an enemy's hand has passed over it. Even so early a writer as Aristotle alludes to a disturbance in the original order of nature; and Schopenhauer writes, "If anything could recon-

cile me to the Old Testament, it would be the story of the Fall, for the present state of the world precisely resembles that of a state of punishment for some great crime."

People often speak of the curse of nature as if, before the Fall, all nature was free from every imperfection, and that only in consequence of that catastrophe did disease, death, and decay invade the animal kingdom, and beasts once graminivorous became carnivorous. This theory was rejected by St. Thomas, and later research seems to prove that there never was a period, even before the creation of man, when the world was free from mighty upheavals and destructive changes. Moreover, these phenomena are not in themselves contrary to nature, but quite natural, and not necessarily or unconditionally opposed to God's idea of the material world. What causes pain, fear, or injury to the individual may benefit the whole, and in *nature* it seems *natural* for a thing to pass away when it has accomplished, within a limited time, the task for which it was created.

The adherents of the so-called "restitution hypothesis," who think that the periods of telluric evolution fixed by geology preceded the Six Days' Work of creation, refer the mighty catastrophes of prehistoric times, as well as the origin of the monsters known to palaeontology, to the fall of the angels. According to their theory, the second verse of Genesis, "The earth was void and empty, and darkness was upon the face of the deep," indicates the destruction by devils of a previous creation, which was remedied by a second creation, effected during the Six Days' Work. This restitution hypothesis has been accepted by certain Protestant theologians in England and Germany, and it has the advantage of facilitating their attempts to reconcile the Biblical account of the Creation with the results of scientific research, but there are weighty arguments against it. It takes for granted that, before man was created, the earth was inhabited by Lucifer and his followers, and in consequence of their rebellion was totally devastated; but such an assumption is not borne out by Holy Scripture nor by the Fathers, and from a theological point of view it is full of difficulties.

It must be admitted that the earth is no longer what it once was, and has not yet become what it ought to be in conformity with its original destiny. On account of its close connection with man, earth, his mother, ought to rise to a higher level of

existence. After creating Adam and Eve, God bade them "fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and all living creatures that move upon the earth." Man, who surpasses in dignity all visible beings, was rightly the last to be created, for, as St. John Chrysostom says, when a king is about to enter a city, the preparations for his coming have been concluded, and in the same way God first created the beautiful world, and then man, who was to rule over everything, thus showing how highly He honored him.

The choicest gifts of nature designed by God for man in the state of innocence were at first restricted to Paradise, but in course of time God intended them to be distributed all over the world, and to mankind was assigned the carrying out of this work. All the world outside the original home of man was wild and uncultivated, for "there was not a man to till the earth" (Gen. ii. 5). No fossils of our species of corn and domestic animals occur in the Tertiary or Diluvial formations, and hence they seem not to have existed before man was created. The human race was entrusted with the duty and power to assist in beautifying the whole earth in accordance with God's design. Even in the state of innocence Adam was required to work, but then work was a pleasure and not a burden. He and his descendants were to cultivate the whole world, thus to extend the Garden of Eden by laboring under exceptionally favorable conditions. When we are told that to man was given dominion over the animal kingdom, we must understand this to refer chiefly to taming the wild beasts.

It is very interesting to notice that all the plants we cultivate came originally from the region where we believe Paradise to have been situated. All the best kinds of our fruit trees were brought from the neighborhood of the Euphrates, presumed to be the cradle of the human race. The ancients called the peach *prunum persicum,* the apricot *prunum armeniacum,* the citron *malum persicum,* the names suggesting the countries whence these fruits were introduced. Olives, vines, almond trees, roses, lilies, etc., were indigenous in the hilly parts of western Asia. Spelt, wheat, barley, and millet probably came from Persia or Armenia. Regarding lucerne, or alfalfa (*medicago sativa*), Pliny tells us that during the Persian wars waged by Darius it was introduced into Europe by the Medes.

It was the East, therefore, that showered its abundance upon Southern Europe, and bestowed upon the whole world most of the flowers and fruits that we enjoy. The New World has contributed but little in comparison; chiefly maize and potatoes. "Investigations concerning fruit trees have brought us to the important conclusion that the lands south of the Caucasus, and the district near the sources of the Euphrates and Tigris, were the home of the earliest civilized mankind. Fruit, the primitive food of the race, was indigenous to this part of the world. If we consider the various kinds of grain, we arrive at the same result; there is no evidence at all to show that any one of our varieties of grain came from India or any other distant country. Lucerne, the plant first used for fodder, came from Media. The origin of most leguminous plants is unknown, but the climate of Armenia and Media is well suited to them; they certainly were not brought from India, nor do they grow wild in Southern Europe" (Link, *Die Urwelt*). This is an important testimony to the fecundity of the first home of the human race.

In consequence of their sin our first parents suffered a painful change in all the circumstances of their life. "Disobedience was the reward of the disobedient," as St. Augustine says; the flesh rebelled against the spirit, and nature became insubordinate to man. Adam was thrust out of Paradise and forced in the sweat of his brow to extort his daily bread from the earth that bore thorns and thistles, for it shared his punishment. The noble gifts already bestowed were curtailed, and others which the Creator had intended to give were withheld. Adam, the representative of the whole human race, involved not only all mankind in his unhappy fall, but on his account nature, too, was deprived of the blessing that it enjoyed in Paradise; the earth was cursed; it incurred like Adam the reprobation of God, and became subjugated to the powers of darkness. The paradisical state that was to spread from Eden to all parts of the world was denied them, leaving even in Eden but scanty traces. God did not modify the original forces and laws of nature on account of sin, nor did He in the beginning order them with reference to the subsequent Fall, but, in consequence of the Fall, He brought it about that man, already weakened in mind and will, found the work of cultivating the land much more difficult. God does not check the elements hostile to man and destructive

to cultivation, nor does He restrain their action by means of other elements, and so nature is left free to destroy its own products, and treat them as its playthings. Slowly and painfully have men advanced in conquering nature, and each success has been achieved at the cost of bitter experience and many disappointments. They have changed the face of the earth, but they cannot add beauty in one place without disfiguring another; each improvement is accompanied with drawbacks, and is neither an adornment of the whole earth nor does it add anything to the happiness of its inhabitants collectively.

Because nature, through man's fault, did not attain to the perfection for which it was designed, it seems to bear a grudge against him, and rages, storms, and works against him; it is not merely an instrument of chastisement in God's hand, but it shares man's punishment; it groans under the law to which it unwillingly submits, and sighs for release; hence the veil of melancholy that shrouds the face of nature.

Man has no right to complain of the hostility and obstinacy of nature; on the contrary, it has the right to accuse him. Nature did no wrong, but was against its will desecrated and outraged by its master. It seems to beg for the restitution of what it lost, and for the removal of the curse resting upon it. It implores man to help it acquire the perfection for which it was destined, and to which by his fault it has never attained.

It is plain that the saints cannot contemplate with unmixed pleasure a world that falls so much short of its original destiny that it often refuses to discharge the functions assigned to it. Ever since the fall of man the world has been the scene of countless evils, and will continue to be the instrument of sin until the day of judgment. It is branded with God's curse, and in its present state is no less unfit to contain the holy city of God and the throne of His glory than is the mortal body to shelter the soul that has been admitted to the Beatific Vision. Before the abode of the saints can be transferred to earth, the world must undergo a process of transformation and glorification; in other words, it needs redemption.

But what is meant by the redemption of nature? is it annihilation? No, for destruction is not redemption, and an everlasting void cannot be a state of perfection. Complete annihilation cannot be the end awaiting this world. Of course, God, who

created all things out of nothing, could by a similar exercise of His power reduce everything again to nothingness. It is not safe to conclude from the earth's actual existence its eternal existence; such a conclusion would go too far, as it would assert also that its existence had no beginning. Passages of Holy Scripture that speak of the world as passing away do not necessarily mean that it will be annihilated, nor do other passages in which there is reference to the world's permanence prove that it will remain unchanged for ever. After saying, "The heavens shall vanish like smoke, and the earth shall be worn away like a garment, and the inhabitants thereof shall perish" (Is. li. 6), the prophet elsewhere says, "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make to stand before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed stand, and your name" (Is. lxvi. 22).

When our Lord declared that heaven and earth should pass away but not His words, He was simply stating that His words were true and unchanging; whilst all created things were liable to change.

St. John, in the Apocalypse (xx. 11), says, "I saw a great white throne and One sitting upon it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away, and there was no place found for them"; but in the next chapter we read, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth," hence the apostle must be speaking of a renewal, not of the annihilation, of the earth.

The idea that the world will be completely destroyed is at variance with Holy Scripture and the teaching of the Fathers. "Thy truth is unto all generations; Thou hast founded the earth and it continueth" (Ps. cxviii. 90). "One generation passeth away and another generation cometh, but the earth standeth for ever" (Eccles. i. 4). "He (God) hath prepared the earth for evermore" (Baruch iii. 32). "It is not the essence, but the fashion, of this world that passes away" (1 Cor. vii. 31). The following account of the change that will take place is derived from the Fathers of the Church, none of whom shared the Manichaean heresy, condemned by the Fifth General Council, according to which the world, being essentially evil, is doomed to complete destruction.

Why should the world be eliminated from God's creation, and the threefold division of that creation be upset? As a new and endless life is promised to the human body, no valid argument

can be brought forward against the permanence of the world; on the contrary much may be said in support of the continued existence of visible nature, which is so closely connected with man as to be, in a sense, an extension of his body. Nature was made to share the guilt and punishment of the human race after the Fall, and has since shared its fortunes, and therefore it is only fair for it to participate in the blessing bestowed on mankind in the redemption, and for its final destiny to be bound up with the final aim of man. Can nature be left with no compensation, or even perish utterly, whilst man, who brought all this destruction upon it, is restored to favor? If he is again to be numbered amongst God's children, nature cannot be left out; it shared the curse, and now it must share the blessing.

In reality, in as far as it could, the world participated in the grace of the redemption. Through the most blessed Virgin earth supplied our Lord with His bodily form, and prepared a temple for the Godhead. By means of the Incarnation it was raised to a close and organic relation with God. It was consecrated by the presence of His Son, who for thirty-three years dwelt among men, and partook of the food and drink produced by the earth. He trod its paths and fields, He knelt in prayer on its mountains and hills, and addressed His followers in its valleys. Earth witnessed His miracles and supplied Him with materials for manifesting His divine mission and power. It bore the cross, that thereon He might accomplish the great sacrifice of atonement, and unite all creation with God; it was moistened by His blood, His tears, and His sweat. The Holy Ghost continues the work of redemption through the Church, applying to each individual its precious fruit, and using as channels of grace the products of the earth;—water for man's rebirth in baptism, bread and wine for the unbloody sacrifice of the Mass and for the nourishment of souls, and oil for the cure or comfort of the sick. Over and over again does the Church release many of earth's products from the curse, and give them a sacramental value, that they may help the faithful in their warfare in this life, and strengthen their hope in God's blessing and assistance.

Since there is a moral connection between man and the outer world, and since their destinies are interwoven, it follows that a transfiguration of the human body must be accompanied by a similar change in its natural surroundings. St. John Chrysos-

tom writes: "If the condition of nature has been rendered worse by thy fault, O man, remember that for thy sake it too will be incorruptible. Thou wilt not enjoy the good things of heaven in solitude, but all creatures subject to thee, even though without reason and sensation, will share them with thee. They will no longer be corruptible, but analogous to thy glorified body; for as nature was forced to follow thee in death and corruption, so will it follow thee also in incorruptibility."

The redemption will be completed, as far as man is concerned, when he rises in glory on the last day, and it will lead to a similar change in the visible world, and raise it to a higher level of existence, such that it can realize perfectly God's design in creation, and at the same time become a worthy abode for glorified mankind and their Head, Jesus Christ. This expectation is implanted in nature, and its fulfilment is guaranteed by God's word.

To the prophets of the Old Testament the beginning of the Messianic kingdom seemed to open a prospect of universal peace, when "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid. The calf and the lion and the sheep shall abide together, and a little child shall lead them. The calf and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall rest, together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall thrust his hand into the den of the basilisk. They shall not hurt, nor shall they kill in all my holy mountain, for the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the covering waters of the sea" (Is. xi. 6–9). "The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days; in the day when the Lord shall bind up the wound of his people, and shall heal the stroke of their wound" (Is. xxx. 26). The prophet's visions must not be interpreted literally, but they refer undoubtedly to the blessing of redemption to be poured out over the brute creation also, taking away all desire to kill and destroy, bestowing universal peace, and finally effecting its exaltation. This prophecy cannot be fulfilled until, at the end of the world, the healing of mankind is completed. By His death Christ has already overcome evil and rendered it powerless, and He has acquired the power to remove all consequences of sin from every part of creation.

"It hath well pleased the Father . . . through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, making peace through the blood of His Cross, both as to the things that are on earth, and the things that are in heaven" (Col. i. 19, 20). When this redeeming grace with its healing and sanctifying fruits has done its work on all who need and desire salvation, then the end of God's design will be near, and all things in heaven and earth will be restored in Christ; all will be united in Him, the one Head, just as, in the beginning, all the universe was created and ordered by the Word of God, who is the centre of creation and the turning-point of its history. This is the "restitution of all things," of which St. Peter speaks (Acts iii. 21; cf. 2 Peter, iii. 7).

When St. Paul wished to encourage the faithful in Rome, in the midst of suffering and persecution, he reminded them of the glory awaiting them, viz., the resurrection of the body, and, by an unexpected turn of speech, he made his consolation more efficacious. He pointed out how nature was also suffering and longing for redemption, and as its complaints were heard, much more would the hopes of man be fulfilled. "The expectation of the creature waiteth for the revelation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him that made it subject, in hope. Because the creature also itself shall be delivered from the servitude of corruption, into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that every creature groaneth and travaileth in pain, even till now. And not only it, but ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption of the sons of God, the redemption of our body" (Rom. viii. 19–23).

By the "creature," as St. Paul uses the word, Irenaeus and Chrysostom, as well as almost all the more recent Catholic commentators understand visible nature, the universe, and more especially our earth; for the geocentric view of nature is still truly Christian. Science has, of course, degraded the earth from its proud position as centre of the universe, and allotted to it the lowly rôle of a comparatively small and insignificant planet; but as the abode of man, as the scene of the Incarnation and Death of Christ, and as the school of saints, it is still the spiritual centre. The Apostle starts with the fact, apparent to every

thoughtful student of nature, that creation does not correspond with God's original purpose, and therefore longs for "the revelation of the sons of God," i.e., for the day when those who in spirit are God's children, will be seen as such outwardly in their bodily form. This will take place at the end of the world, when the blessed with glorified bodies will be declared God's children and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. Only after man, the masterpiece of creation, has attained his full perfection, will nature's turn come. Hence it longs impatiently for the resurrection of the blessed dead. Now it is still subject to "vanity" and "corruption," displayed not only in the continual alternation of birth and death, growth and decay, but also in its condition as a whole.

"Not willingly," i.e., not in consequence of any inherent forces and laws, was the world condemned to corruption, but through something foreign and hostile, viz., the sin of Adam, its lord and master, with whose destiny its own was, by divine decree, intimately connected. Yet it was not handed over to corruption with no hope of rescue. As nature was cursed for man's sake, so for his sake it will be blessed and glorified. It shall be delivered from the servitude of corruption. The irresistible, cruel force of sin exerts its tyrannical sway over every department of nature; it is the power and fear of death, and the earth feels this bondage. The children of God will enjoy perfect liberty only when glorified in both soul and body; for then the consequences and all possibility of sin will be removed, and death will be swallowed up in victory; all lamentations will be silenced, and body and soul will be joined in perfect harmony.

The rest of creation, which unwillingly is involved in the destiny of sinful man, and with him has suffered and done penance, will, like him, be glorified when all is made new. It is significant that Adam is called 'son of earth,' and all his descendants regard the earth as their mother; yet they are also its glory and its crown. Nature has yielded its treasures and supplied the forces necessary for building a temple worthy of the immortal soul of man, and when the last man is released from bondage, nature will also shake off the curse of sin and advance on the way of perfection; not that it can of itself release and raise itself, but its Creator will call it to share in the glory of the Redeemer and the redeemed, for their sake.

Birth is always accompanied by pain, death is a painful birth to a higher life, and so nature cannot look forward to the new birth awaiting it without groans and fear; and St. Paul speaks of these signs of tribulation as already present, for he says, "Every creature groaneth and travaileth in pain."

The Fathers refer to the same passages of Holy Scripture in support of their belief in a renewal of the world. St. Cyril of Jerusalem says that God will remove the heavens, not to destroy them, but to restore them in more beautiful form. St. Gregory Nazianzen, in his sermon on the death of his brother Caesarius, says, "I await the archangel's call, the last trumpet blast, the transformation of heaven and earth, the dissolution of the elements and the renewal of the whole world." Similar expressions occur in the works of many of the Fathers, and both, mediaeval and modern theologians are almost unanimous in holding the same opinion, basing it upon the physical and moral relation between earth and man.

Belief in the ultimate renewal of the world was already professed in the earliest known writings, in whose authors it was perhaps an echo of the first revelation made by God in Paradise, and retained by men after their dispersion. Not only was it taught in the schools of pagan philosophers, but it lived in the hearts of the people, as ancient poets tell us, and they reflected most faithfully the feelings and disposition, as well as the religious ideas, of their contemporaries.

But, it may be asked, what means will God employ in order to bring the world to a state of perfection? The answer given unanimously by Christian and pagan tradition, by theologians and philosophers is this: "The world will be transformed by means of fire." We are told in many places that the Lord will come with fire to judge the world. "Behold the Lord will come with fire" (Is. lxvi. 15); "His throne was like flames of fire" (Dan. vii. 9); "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with the angels of his power in a flame of fire" (2 Thess. i. 7); "The day of the Lord shall declare it, because it shall be revealed in fire" (1 Cor. iii. 13). Of the passages referring to a reconstitution of the world, those in 2 Peter iii. are the most conclusive.

The Apostle warns the faithful against "deceitful scoffers, walking after their own lusts, saying: 'Where is His promise of His coming? For since the time that the fathers slept,

all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.'" Heretics, who denied the second coming of Christ, because nature remained unchanging, were reminded by St. Peter of the Deluge in the time of Noe: "This they are wilfully ignorant of, that the heavens were before, and the earth out of water and through water, consisting by the word of God, whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." Only the outward form was destroyed, and in the same way the future fire will not put an end to the world itself, but only to its present condition. "But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of the ungodly men." The meaning is:—as it would have been foolish in Noe's time to deny the possibility of a deluge, because the earth seemed firmly established, and the course of nature regular, so it is no less foolish to say now that there will be no judgment and destruction of the world, for the reason that, since the deluge, there has been no violent interruption in the orderly course of nature. On the contrary, the world is threatened with a fresh catastrophe, incomparably greater and mightier than the former; the one being caused by water and the other by fire. St. Peter continues: "Of this one thing be not ignorant, my beloved, that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord delayeth not his promise, as some imagine, but dealeth patiently for your sake, not willing that any should perish, but that all should return to penance. But the day of the Lord shall come as a thief, in which the heavens shall pass away with great violence, and the elements shall be melted with heat, and the earth and the works which are in it shall be burnt up. Seeing then that all these things are to be dissolved, what manner of people ought you to be in holy conversation and godliness? Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of the Lord, by which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with the burning heat? But we look for new heavens and a new earth, according to his promise, in which justice dwelleth."

Such is St. Peter's account of the great conflagration at the last day. Commentators are divided as to the meaning of "heaven" in the above passage. St. Ambrose and St. Jerome think that all the stars will be affected by the general catas-

trophe, but St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas limit it to our atmosphere. The latter opinion is supported by Holy Scripture, but not by science, which, in its calculations concerning the future, takes only natural forces into account, and not any direct intervention of God's almighty power. St. Peter seems to put the deluge and the final conflagration on a level; therefore the fire on the last day will probably be limited to our atmosphere, and the destruction that he describes will be exclusively telluric and not cosmic in character.

The elements mentioned by the apostle are not those which modern chemistry knows by this name, but those known by the ancients; viz., air, fire, earth, and water. Air is mentioned as the heavens, fire is the consuming agent, and so only earth and water can be meant by "the elements." Neither can resist the overwhelming force of fire, but are resolved by it into their chemical constituents. When the whole globe is on fire, all its "works," viz., the products of nature and art, will perish, and nothing will be left but a shapeless, glowing, gaseous mass, out of which God's creative hand will form the new heaven and the new earth. It will be a new creation, though not in the sense that a new world is called into existence out of nothing, but only inasmuch as from the purified materials of the old world a new one will be fashioned, in which justice will dwell. The form will pass away, but the substance will remain, and by means of fire God will restore the earth to the condition in which it was in prehistoric times, when, according to Kant, La Place, Herschel, and others, it moved a gaseous globe in the space of the universe.

This change is to serve the double purpose of purging away all traces of sin from the earth, and of preparing it to be the abode of glorified humanity, and of all the elements fire is the most suitable to accomplish these ends. It does not only consume, but purifies and refines, and by laying hold of the whole terrestrial system, it will resolve everything in inorganic nature into its original constituents, and produce the material fit to make the new world. At the first creation God prepared a dwelling for earthly human beings; at the second He will make for heavenly beings a Paradise constructed out of the original matter of the earth.

The pagan nations of antiquity already believed that the

world would be renewed by means of fire; this belief was undoubtedly a survival of the first revelation, of which a trace remained in all pagan religious systems, although among the mass of human additions it is hard to discern it. The great final conflagration is assumed to be necessary before the restoration of the Golden Age, and it is closely connected with the coming of the Messiah. The chief difference between the pagan and the Christian opinions on this point is that the former do not always distinguish between the great Restorer's first and second coming. The Second Advent, which will either immediately precede or immediately follow the universal conflagration, is fundamentally the closing scene of the world's history, when God's kingdom on earth will triumph once and for all over all His adversaries. There is nothing surprising in the juxtaposition of two events separated by a considerable interval of time if they are viewed from a great distance.

Not to weary the reader, we shall forbear to discuss in detail the legends on the subject current among the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Persians, Indians, Chinese, Greeks, and Romans. Though they vary greatly, they all more or less resemble the Christian doctrine; the universal conflagration is sometimes described as recurring periodically at the end of each epoch of the world's history, but all agree in connecting it with the General Judgment, which is to end with the triumph of good gods over malignant spirits, or, according to some accounts, with the destruction of the whole theogony. In Europe the doctrine of the destruction and renewal of the world is said to have been promulgated through the Sibylline Books, a collection of legends and prophecies which an imaginary prophetess was believed to have uttered. The same idea occurs in the Orphic poems. Greek philosophers such as Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Socrates, and especially the Stoics, dealt with the future conflagration, and incorporated in their philosophical systems the legends current on the subject, in so far as they coincided with their own opinions regarding the end of the world. They engaged also in wearisome calculations concerning the duration of "the year of the gods," the winter of which they called the cataclysm, or great flood, and the summer the ecpyrosis or conflagration.

The writings of their philosophers and poets show that Greeks and Romans held the same beliefs about the end of the world.

Ovid represents Jupiter as considering Deucalion's flood, and saying:

> *Esse quoque in fatio reminiscitur, affore tempus,*
> *Quo mare, quo tellus, correptaque regia caeli.*
> *Ardeat, et mundi moles operosa laboret.*
>
> *Metam.* I, 256.

What our pre-Christian forefathers thought about the destruction of the world and of the gods, we learn from the two Eddas, that contain a stately description of the final catastrophe and of the horrors preceding it. The earlier Edda is written in vigorous verse, the later in prose. Hitherto it has been generally assumed that these records date from a time antecedent to the separation of the Scandinavian tribes, so that they have preserved for us the old northern mythology in its original, pagan form. It was not until 1879 that this theory was contradicted, when Professor Bang and Professor Bugge of Christiania put forward the opinion that the two collections of poems, purely Germanic in origin, received large additions from the Christian Kelts in Iceland and the Anglo-Saxons in England, so that they could not be so thoroughly Scandinavian and Germanic as had previously been believed. These professors think that the myths of the Edda originated not long before they were committed to writing in the 13th Century, or, according to Bugge, in the 9th Century. E. H. Meyer is wrong in assuming that the Völuspâ, in its earliest form, as discovered by Müllenhoff, was composed by Priest Saemund the Wise, who died in 1130. If these scholars are correct (which does not seem probable), we cannot regard the traditions of the North as necessarily very old. I think, however, that in their examination of the language, grammatical forms, and versification of the Eddas they have lost sight of the ancient traditions belonging to the primitive faith and common to all religions.

According to the Edda, there will be a terrible tempest, Fimbulvetr, followed by two other similar periods of stormy winters, without any summer between them. Men will cast aside morality and despise law until wolves come, one of which swallows the sun and the other the moon. The stars will be darkened, the earth will quake and trees will be uprooted. The monster Fenriswolf (i.e., darkness) will break loose and the sea encroach upon the land, because the Midgard dragon, cast

by Thor into its depths, is seeking a dry place. The Fenriswolf opens its jaws, so that the lower jaw touches earth and the upper jaw reaches to heaven; its eyes and nose emit flames. Beside it is the Midgard dragon, spitting poison, and with its breath defiling air and sea. Amidst this uproar the heavens burst asunder. From Muspellheim (the fiery world of the south, as opposed to Niflheim in the north) will come Muspell's sons, led by Surtr, who is surrounded by a sea of flames, and whose sword flashes like the sun. The bridge connecting the earth with Asaheim, the home of the gods, falls. On the plain of Vigrid Muspell's sons meet the Fenriswolf and the Midgard dragon. They are joined by Loki, Hrymr, and all the giants, and Heindallr, the watchman of heaven, awakens the gods, who can find no place of safety, for the ancient tree Yggdrassil, under which they were wont to meet in council, is threatening to fall, and terror reigns supreme on earth and in heaven. The gods in alliance with the Einherier, the happy dwellers in Paradise, arm themselves for battle, and ride forth on to the plain, with Woden and Thor at their head. Woden fights with the Fenriswolf, and is swallowed by this monster, but Vidar revenges him by killing it. Thor kills the Midgard dragon, but dies of its poison. Freyr falls in conflict with Surtr, and Tyr is bitten by Garmr, the hound of hell, who breaks loose from its den in Gnipi, and causes great destruction. Thus the Asen are slain, and Ragnaröck, the twilight of the gods, is consummated. Then Surtr throws out fire and burns up the earth; this is Muspilli, the universal conflagration. But a new earth, green and beautiful, rises out of the sea, bearing fruits, the seeds of which have never been sown. Vidar and Vali, Woden's sons, did not perish in Surtr's flames, but live on the new plain of Ida, where was formerly Asgard, the gods' abode. There, too, are Thor's sons, Magni and Modi; and Baldr, the god of light, and Hödr, who slew him, return from Hel, the region of the dead, and sit peaceably together, talking of the past. The later Edda adds that Lif and Lifthrasir, the only human beings who escaped the great fire, become the ancestors of a new race.

Muspilli and Ragnarök, the destruction of the world and of the gods, belong to the early German mythology, and bear witness to the serious morality and poetical talents of the Teu-

tonic tribes; but we cannot maintain that the two Eddas show more resemblance to Christian than to pagan traditions. After the introduction of Christianity the old legends concerning the end of the world gradually were assimilated to Christian teaching, partially in the "Muspilli," an old High German poem discovered by Schneller, and completely in the Old-Saxon "Heliand." Subsequently further additions were made from rabbinical Jewish traditions and from classical authors. Hence besides the Christian version of the end of the world, there were legends, strongly tinged with paganism, which were current during the Middle Ages, and even now have not quite disappeared.

The Sibylline Books that have come down to us are partly of Christian origin, compiled with the intention of converting the Jews. Besides these books, the works of Hippolytus, the Pseudo-Ephraem and the Pseudo-Methodius, as well as Daniel's visions, have been the sources of mediaeval traditions regarding the Antichrist, the last judgment, and the end of the world. Some two hundred years ago Malvenda published in a large folio volume a collection of prophecies of this kind, and more recently A. Maury, Bousset, Wadstein, and Reuschel have investigated this mysterious subject.

Holy Scripture does not consider the world from the same point of view as science, for it is concerned with it only in its relation to man, and consequently speaks of the end of the world only in connection with the end of the human race.

And what has science to say on this topic? It admits that what revelation makes known as certain is at least possible, and that fire may consume the earth and the heavenly bodies. As, however, science takes only natural forces into account, it is limited to the deductions and suppositions that can be derived from them. Scientists acknowledge that from the law of the conservation of energy they cannot conclude that the universe will remain for ever unchanged. On the contrary, all the forces of nature tend to be converted into heat, which is distributed equally in all directions, and so the universe seems to be approaching a condition in which there will be no variations of temperature. This would result in the cessation of all activity, and the world, that came forth from chaos, would fall back into chaos, and have no power to restore itself. Science, that knows only physical forces and laws, takes cognizance of nothing else.

According to many scientists the future awaiting our planet is the following. — Air and water will disappear, and the earth will be a cold, arid globe, having its surface torn and cleft, and devoid of all organic life. The molten interior will have shrunk to the centre. The possibility of a violent reaction before its final extinction, and of its breaking through the earth's crust, must be admitted, on the analogy of astronomical phenomena. From time to time new or temporary stars appear in the sky; they suddenly blaze up, and sooner or later vanish. These are believed to be stars in process of extinction, and should therefore be called old rather than new. Their sudden appearance seems to be due to a violent explosion of the glowing mass in their interior, which sets the dry crust in flames. In 1572 Tycho de Brahe discovered a new star in Cassiopeia, which disappeared at the end of seven months. A similar star was observed in 1866. Some people regard these new stars as foreboding an approaching catastrophe, and earthquakes as the prelude to the earth's destruction. From the point of view of astrophysics, the Biblical description of the end of the world seems not only possible, but probable. No one but God can say by what natural force it will be brought about; perhaps it will be caused by the fire in the earth's interior, perhaps the earth will be set on fire by a shower of glowing asteroids or by a comet, or perhaps intense heat may be generated by a sudden cessation of the earth's rotation.

Long before the extinction of the universe the sun will be exhausted, and cease to give heat and light, and earlier still all life will cease on every planet, including our own. All scientists foretell an end of the world in the sense of a cessation of all natural processes, both physical and chemical. The sun will probably last in approximately its present condition for six or eight millions of years; then its radiance will gradually diminish, though for perhaps one hundred million years or so it will not reach the state in which it will cool down, like a hot stone. Finally it will become incapable of preserving our planet from freezing.

A period of time defying all calculation will pass before the causes that would naturally bring the world to an end can have their full effect. Our sun, as Pfaff says, rushes through space at the same rate as the planets, and carries us with it. We know

not whence it comes nor whither it goes. Millions and millions of fixed stars move likewise, and nowhere is there rest. The force of attraction is felt universally, and none can say when and where our sun will come into collision with another, and when finally all the forces of heaven will be set in motion, or all be united into one. We should modestly refrain from calculations involving millions of years. Scientists may postpone indefinitely the time when the earth will die as a result of natural causes, but they cannot deny the possibility of its destruction by some unforeseen accident, as they would say, i.e., by the direct intervention of God. Theologians, too, should beware of assigning a date to that great day, known only to our Creator.

We know on the authority of Holy Scripture (1 Thess. iv. 16) that there will be human beings alive when the end comes, and therefore this will happen before natural causes have brought all organic life to a close. Whether the great fire will precede or follow the Last Judgment is a subordinate question on which the opinions of theologians are divided. St. Thomas and others thinks that the fire will precede the judgment; St. Augustine, St. Anselm, and St. Bonaventure think that it will follow. Of course no conclusion is possible; we can only say that the dead must rise before they are judged, and simultaneously with the resurrection will take place the glorification of the just, who after the judgment are to be raised on high. After the general conflagration there will be no atmosphere. If it is to be regarded as the final judgment upon the earth, which is cursed on account of our sin, it must, of course, follow the judgment upon mankind, just as the transformation of the earth can only take place after the glorification of humanity.

Finally the question arises, what will the new earth be like after the conflagration? We do not know, and must content ourselves with suppositions and hypotheses, as we must do with regard to the last things in general. The fundamental idea that gives us some clue to it is that the redemption and renewal of the world in general must be in accordance with the glorification of the human race. Consequently we must believe that the earth will be raised to a level superior to nature, and not merely purged from natural defects and imperfections, and adorned with additional forces and privileges in the natural order. The natural course of events points, according to scientists, to the

extinction, not to the renewal of the world. Certainly the final completion of the material world is a renewal, thorough and far-reaching, but it is much more, inasmuch as it is also a new creation, for, by means of it, nature herself is raised above the state of integrity that existed in Paradise to a height which its native powers and laws could never attain. The resurrection and glorification of the human body cannot be the result of any natural process; nor can the completion of the world be described as an effect of the working of natural laws. Both are the outcome of God's immediate and supernatural intervention; both bear witness to His omnipotence.

The glory of man's risen body will far surpass the beauty of Adam's body in Paradise, and in the same way the splendor of the new earth will be greater than that of Eden. The one transformation is the model and standard of the other. The body will partake in the glory of the spirit, that is steeped in God's light and life, and so likewise will the earth partake in the glory of the risen body — like this last it will be spiritualized and refined, and free from the laws imposed on matter; for it is to be the home of saints in glory, and adapted to their way of life.

It follows that death and decay must cease. "Death shall be no more . . . behold, I make all things new" (Apoc. xx. 415); and consequently sickness, pain and sorrow will be known no more. As all that is corruptible must pass away, there cannot be a new flora and fauna on the glorified earth. Most theologians, both ancient and modern, think that there will be no organic life, and that since the glorified body needs neither food nor clothing, plants and animals would be superfluous. They were designed, not only to supply man with what he required to support life, but also to remind him of the Creator's greatness and goodness, and of the duty of offering Him love and adoration. The glorified earth, however, even though without living creatures, will still proclaim God's majesty and evoke from its inhabitants praise and thanksgiving. Could there really be any further need for animals and plants? What is all the spiritual uplifting that the blessed could derive from them in comparison with the knowledge and happiness that they will receive in the Beatific Vision, without ever feeling weariness or distaste? They are penetrated with God's light, and

gaze into the abyss of His being, beholding the wonderful panorama of the universe and perceiving the fitness and beauty, the order and harmony of creation, not merely from visible phenomena, but from the Creator's thoughts and plans. The marvels of nature are only a dim reflection or shadow of the inner marvels of God, and we shall need their help no longer when we know Him perfectly.

But would not the absence of plants and animals cause a sense of emptiness? This has been asserted by people who failed to remember that our eyes could never weary of the glorious sight of our Lord and His blessed Mother, of all the saints and of the entrancing beauty and brilliancy of the earth. Another objection of greater weight is that, in consequence of the absence of all organic life, the earth would lose in symmetry and beauty. In reply we may ask how many species of plants or animals are requisite to maintain its beauty and symmetry; those still in existence or others also, long extinct? Must poisonous plants and destructive animals be included among the representatives of life on the new earth? Some would tell us that there is no need for all kinds of plants and animals, but only for the most beautiful and best-beloved to be restored and glorified. My own opinion is that all without exception will be annihilated. If vegetable life and lower forms of animal life might disappear without in any way marring the perfection of the new earth, then all purely animal life might as well end, especially as it has attained its highest development in the human body, and so the glorified body after the resurrection is its most perfect and worthy representative. If the three chief classes of created beings continue to exist, the order of creation is preserved; the purely material world attains its apotheosis in the glorification of the earth; the corporeal and spiritual world in the resurrection of man's body to enjoy the bliss of heaven; and the purely spiritual world in the ecstasy of the angels.

Another argument against the restoration and permanence of plants and animals in the renovated world is derived from the difficulty, not to say the impossibility of showing that the conditions necessary to organic life will exist there. As the general conflagration will destroy all life, the restoration of living organisms would be their new creation. This is, of

course, possible, but for many reasons improbable. As death and decay will have vanished, the new plants and animals would have to be incorruptible; "they would not need food, but would live without the processes of vegetable life; in a way analogous to the glorified human body they would display the abundance of their vital force, exercising in turn all their various powers, in their movement and activity, but, above all, by the fact that their life would support itself, and require no external sustenance" (Bautz).

According to this theory we should have immortal plants and animals, that live without renewing their tissues. This makes even larger demands upon our imagination than the belief of the Fiji Islanders in the resurrection of animals and cocoanuts. The life of the human body does not support and sustain itself, but is supported and sustained by the soul.

Even though there may eventually be no organic life on the earth, there is no reason to fear any lack of beauty. We may follow St. John's example and give our imagination free rein, knowing that our expectations will fall far short of the reality. The world even now contains within it countless precious treasures; what will it be when purged by fire? All the gross substances will be cast away, and we may picture these heaps of flaming dross as the abode of the reprobate, and as, at the same time, a type of their moral condition.

We may picture the abode of the blessed as a crystal globe, encircled by the purest light, and flashing and sparkling with an infinite variety of colors. It reflects the light that streams from the bodies of the saints, as from millions of stars, and that has its source in our Lord's glorified body. This body is to the world after its transformation what the sun is to our earth, and what God is to the world of spirits, viz., the centre and fount of light — a sun that infinitely surpasses our sun in radiance and splendor. As soon as this Sun begins to illumine the earth, the prophecy of Isaias will be fulfilled: "The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days" (xxx. 26); and there will be no further need of the material sun and moon that now cast their light on the earth.

On this new earth, as St. Peter says, justice will dwell, for Christ, the Sun of Justice, will be its light; all its inhabitants

will wear garments of righteousness, and, being perfectly united with the Author of all Justice, will thenceforth do nothing but works of light.

Delitzsch writes: "It is the same heaven and the same earth, and yet they are different; just as the body, that clothes us, is the same and yet different. The whole world now appears as a new creation of divine love. Hitherto both wrath and grace pervaded the earth, but now wrath is extinct, grace has accomplished her work, and love reigns supreme. The groans of the creature in pain have given place to songs of exultation, the long waiting to satisfaction, corruption to glory, and servitude to triumph. The faithful who believed in Christ are now in glory, and there is peace between God and man, peace between the spirit and body of man, and peace in all creation. The Blood of Jesus Christ has secured peace, for through Him God has reconciled to Himself all things in heaven and earth." "God is all in all."

When the material world has participated fully in the blessing of redemption, all will be perfect and restored to its first beauty. The heavenly Jerusalem has come down to earth and has become earthly without ceasing to be heavenly. Christ is the cornerstone in the City of God, and all His faithful followers, who have patiently suffered themselves to be stripped, smoothed, and chiselled here, are like jewels set in the magnificent, imperishable building. "Behold the tabernacle of God with men; and He will dwell with them; and they shall be His people, and God Himself with them shall be their God" (Apoc. xxi. 3). "Here will He dwell, for He hath chosen it" (Ps. cxxxi. 14). Therefore exult and be glad, O Earth, for thou art highly exalted and transformed into heaven! Thou wast once a vale of tears, now thou art the abode of joy and bliss; once despised as an ignoble planet in one of a thousand solar systems, now solemnly proclaimed the centre of the universe. Thou wilt nevermore see darkness, nor need another light, for thou art thyself a shining sun. Rejoice, because Eden is restored to thee in all its fresh beauty, never again to lose it. Once thou wast cursed by thy children, now thou art blessed by them for ever.

We have seen why the earth now in many places seems inhospitable and barren; in its present state it is a fit abode for man, who, after his expulsion from Paradise, wanders over its surface. Nowhere can he find rest and a permanent habitation, and the earth itself reminds him that he cannot find happiness save in his Father's house; but there will be no room for such reminders, when the last of the elect are gathered home. Baader writes: "Nature accompanies us through this life, as far as it can. With motherly care it strews our path with flowers, but they fade quickly in order to remind us that here below we have no abiding city. Woe to him who forgets this fact and looks upon this land of exile as his true home! He is like a traveller, who sits eating and drinking in an inn, until he has consumed all his provisions, and will be forced to die of hunger, as he continues his long journey."

Men have learned how to control nature, but not how to control themselves. Seldom does any idea of voluntary self-denial cross their minds, and they regard the spiritual life as merely an echo or reproduction of their bodily existence. In their eagerness for material progress they lose sight of the ideal Good, and of their moral and religious obligations, and the exploitation of nature by means of industry and technical knowledge tends in many cases to encourage that spirit of hostility to God which characterizes materialism both in practice and theory. As their knowledge of nature and their skill in availing themselves of its gifts increase, men have lost their insight into the supernatural, and are content to regard it as beyond their comprehension. Life and manners are governed by worldly principles and are cut off from religion, the source of all duties, and so lofty ideals are set aside, and their place is taken by aesthetic appreciation of what is refined and correct.

Alfred Russell Wallace, a famous traveller and naturalist, who shares with Darwin the distinction of having put forward the theory of evolution, writes: "A defective morality is the great blot of modern civilization, and the greatest hindrance to true progress. . . . Our mastery over the forces of nature has led to a rapid growth of population and a vast accumulation of wealth; but these have brought with them such an amount of poverty and crime, and have fostered the growth of so much sordid feeling and so many fierce passions, that it

may well be questioned, whether the mental and moral status of our population has not on the average been lowered, and whether the evil has not over-balanced the good. Compared with our wondrous progress in physical science and its practical applications, our system of government, of administering justice, of national education, and our whole social and moral organization, remains in a state of barbarism" (*The Malay Archipelago,* vol. 2, p. 461, 1869).

Rudolf Eucken remarks: "Nature has vanquished us in our own domain; we have attained to the exact opposite of what we intended. We wished to subjugate nature to reason, and now with all our intellect we have fallen victims to nature."

In consequence of idolizing matter, we have converted man's supremacy over nature into a supremacy of nature over man, so that it is now difficult to recognize the slave adorned in royal purple. Nothing but religion, and a morality based on religion, will ever restore to us our lost prerogative.

CHAPTER XIV

"A LITTLE WHILE"—ERRONEOUS IDEAS ABOUT EXISTENCE AFTER DEATH

WHEN the apostles and disciples learnt from their divine Master that the hour of parting was at hand, they were overwhelmed with sorrow. They felt just what we feel when we have to take a last farewell of those whom we love. They delighted so much in their Lord's visible presence that it seemed to them impossible to live without Him. It did not occur to them to find consolation in the thought that their outward intercourse with Him had to cease in order that He might exchange His present lowly condition for one of glory, and in His human nature take possession of His heavenly kingdom. Their love for their divine Master had not yet risen to this pitch, and so He rebuked them, saying: "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice that I go to my Father." "None of you asketh me: Whither goest thou? But because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow hath filled your heart" (John xiv. 28; xvi. 5).

They were so confused and dejected that they could not appreciate the advantage promised them by their Redeemer in compensation for their temporary separation from Him. "You shall be made sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labor, hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but when she hath brought forth the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. So also you now indeed have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man shall take from you" (John xvi. 20).

And in even more positive language did our Lord assure His companions that they would see Him again: "A little while, and now you shall not see me; and again a little while, and you shall see me" (v. 16). The apostles were so thoroughly ac-

customed to being with their Master that even a short separation from Him seemed long, and they did not understand His words, nor did they realize that He would rise again from the dead.

Whoever has had to mourn the loss of a friend will recognize his own feelings in those of the apostles. Their eyes were not opened until they beheld the open sepulchre, and the stone rolled away from the entrance. "Fear not," said the angel to the women, "for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified; he is not here, for he is risen, as he said, . . . and behold he will go before you into Galilee; there you shall see him" (Matth. xxviii. 5–7). As they went on their way, Jesus appeared to them, and again bade them fear not; later on He appeared also to Peter, to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, and to the apostles, both individually and collectively. His prophecies were fulfilled; on the third day He returned to His friends, and although He left them again, the second parting was not sorrowful. He went to prepare a home for them, and in time called His faithful servants to be with Him there.

"Fear not!" These words should be recalled by every mourner, for the departed live on, though no longer in our midst. They have gone before us to the heavenly Jerusalem, where we shall see them again, and no one will take away from us the joy of reunion. A little while, and the separation will be over, for eternity will have begun. Death breaks bonds only to renew them, and every step towards the grave brings us nearer to the joyful day, when we shall see all those who have gone before us in the faith, and are now awaiting our coming.

Nevertheless many complain that the time is long. God alone knows and determines how long we shall have to wait, but no time is long in comparison with eternity. "The number of the days of men at the most are a hundred years; as a drop of water of the sea are they consumed, and as a pebble of the sand; so are a few years compared to eternity" (Ecclus. xviii. 8). It behooves us to strive to become worthy of joining our dear ones in heaven soon after our own death.

We read of Lazarus that upon his death he was carried to Abraham's bosom, and our Lord, when hanging on the cross, promised the penitent thief that he should that very day be with Him in Paradise. St. Paul couples the soul's departure from

the body with its entrance to heaven, and says, "We are confident and have a good will to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 8). He is sure that his own death will bring him to Christ: "I have a desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ" (Phil. i. 23).

On the other hand some eminent theologians, misinterpreting certain passages of Scripture, have thought that the just would not enter heaven until the day of General Judgment. This opinion was held, among others, by Tertullian, Irenaeus, Justin, Origen, Theodoret, Oecumenius, Theophylactus, Lactantius; those chiefly, therefore, who favored chiliasm (millenarians; those who believed in a second coming of Christ to reign on earth for one thousand years). They declared that the disciple was not above his master, and that, therefore, the just souls must remain in a refuge for souls (*psychodocheum, diversorium, receptaculum*) until the resurrection on the last day before they could enter heaven. Only at the end of the world would their number be complete, and then Christ would give them the kingdom. The wheat and the cockle were to grow together until the harvest, i.e., until the General Judgment, and then be separated by the reapers, i.e., the angels. Even the apostles would not receive their crowns until that day. Some of these early Fathers make an exception in favor of martyrs. They all agree in representing the souls of the just in their refuge, also called Paradise, as longing for the Lord's coming, but otherwise suffering no sorrow, save perhaps on account of our shortcomings; they describe them as enjoying a foretaste of the bliss of heaven.

These Fathers did not, however, condemn or altogether reject the other and correct opinion, in fact some of them seem to have wavered between the two views, and, after all, the idea that the just will not receive their full reward until the last day is in so far correct that perfect happiness can be enjoyed only by man as a whole, after his soul is again for ever united with his body.

The majority of the earlier Fathers are, however, in favor of the doctrine that corresponds with Holy Scripture, and this was the opinion expressed by St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Basil, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Jerome, and St. Cyprian. This holy bishop of Carthage, who died as a martyr in 258 A.D., consoled his beloved flock during a terrible

pestilence with the following words: "We must always remember, my dearest Brethren, that here below we are but strangers and pilgrims. Let us therefore long for that day, which will bring each of us to our common home, releasing us from the snares of the world, and transferring us to the liberty of the heavenly kingdom. Does not a traveller make haste, when he is called to return to a happy home after sojourning abroad? If the hills of his own country are beyond the sea, does he not fervently pray for a favorable wind, that he may more speedily be restored to his friends? Our home is in Paradise, where our fathers and forefathers already dwell; shall we not hasten to greet them? A host of souls dear to us await us; parents, brothers and children are impatient for our coming; their salvation is assured, but they are anxious on our account. With what joy shall we meet and embrace each other! With them we shall reign, fearing neither separation nor death, for we shall live for ever. Is not this rapture and bliss?" After enumerating the groups of the elect, the saintly bishop continues: "Come, my dearest brethren, let us hasten to join them; would that we may soon be with them and with Christ! May God look down with pleasure upon our thoughts, as they rise to Him; and may Christ deign to hear the sighs of our faithful hearts, for He bestows more abundant glory upon those who long most ardently for His presence." In the same discourse St. Cyprian admonishes his people not to grieve too much for their brethren whom God had taken to Himself: "We know that they have not left us, but have only gone before — *non eos amitti, sed praemitti, recedentes praecedere* — they have departed before us; we may long for them, but not bewail them, for we must not give scandal to unbelievers, who would rightly reproach us if, while protesting that our friends are with God, we wept over them as though they no longer existed. We must not profess our faith with our lips, and deny it with our hearts."

That the souls of the perfectly just enter heaven immediately after death was stated by the Council of Lyons, in 1274, in the following words: "We believe that the souls of those who after baptism have remained free from any stain of sin, and also of those who, though they sinned, are purified either in this life or the next, are at once admitted to heaven."

In consequence of the famous dispute between Pope John xxii and the Friars Minor on the one side, and the Dominicans on the other, the Council of Florence in 1439 added to this decision, "so that these souls clearly behold God Himself, the Three in One." That this Pope held the orthodox belief concerning the moment when the souls of the departed are admitted to the Beatific Vision is proved by a statement he made shortly before his death in the presence of the Cardinals, and also by a letter of congratulation, preserved in the Vatican archives, which he addressed in 1317 to Mary of Provence, wife of Robert II, on the occasion of the beatification of her son, Louis of Anjou, Bishop of Toulouse. Subsequently the Council of Trent confirmed the doctrine laid down by the Council of Florence.

Outside the Catholic Church a great many extraordinary ideas have prevailed regarding the condition of the soul between death and the resurrection. Some have only an historical interest, but a few have been revived in recent times. For instance, the Thnetopsychists claimed that the soul dies with the body and is with it restored to life. The Anabaptists, Nestorians, Socinians, Armenians, and many Protestant theologians, hold that the soul passes into a "soul slumber," and that the dead thus remain asleep until they are aroused at the General Judgment.

When we pray that the dead may enjoy eternal rest, do we mean that we wish them to be inert and unconscious until the last day? No; it is impossible that such condition be the "eternal rest" of those who have entered life everlasting, and upon whom eternal light shines. For the souls of the just death is the dawn of the never-ending Sabbath that brings them rest from all their labors and struggles. *Non ibi erit refectio, quia non defectio; non ibi erit negotia, quia nec indigentia.* They rest in God, their highest Good, whom thenceforth they will possess undisturbed. They have attained to eternal peace and have reached their goal, and hence enjoy perfect bliss. Faith has given place to sight, and hope to fruition, and love alone remains. It is not, however, that kind of love that restlessly seeks its object, and consumes itself in longing, but it is the love that is completely satisfied by the possession of God.

This eternal rest involves the fullest possible activity of all mental faculties, which are kept in motion by the constant influx

of the knowledge and love of God, and never suffer from weariness or confusion. God, the eternal and infinite ocean of light, love, joy, and life, is the happiness of the saints, whose faculties are not subject to the laws of nature, but are intensified in a marvellous manner. This is the secret of constant motion in rest, or progress after the goal is reached. Knowing and loving are at once work and recreation, activity and rest, and the happiness of the blessed consists in the knowledge and love of God and of one another.

Another erroneous belief to which we must refer is Metempsychosis, or reincarnation, which was held by the ancient Egyptians, as well as by the Greek philosophers Pherecydes, Pythagoras, and Plato. The Keltic nations had some idea of it, and the theory was adopted by many sects, such as the Carpocratians, Marcionites, Manichaeans, Priscillianists, Paulicians, and Albigenses. It has reappeared recently, and, thanks to the perverse instincts of some men antagonistic to the faith, it has been rendered more objectionable by crude additions derived from pagan sources.

The belief in such fantastic creations of the imagination assures its adherents that the soul enjoys the prospect of being united with a new body immediately after death, so that it can at once begin another existence. As soon as it lays aside its animal body, it is supposed to rise to the ether surrounding our earth, and there by means of its vital force to produce a new organism. And this again will not be permanent, but will be in turn cast off like a worn-out garment, and the soul seeks another star in the universe, again assumes a body, and continues thus, rising step by step. This idea may please the imagination, but sound reason must condemn it. It has been revived in France recently, and the theory of reincarnation held by spiritists of Kardec's school is really repulsive. According to this theory each soul has to be incorporated in a body on this earth time after time, until it has completely fulfilled its earthly mission. These views have found many adherents, especially among the Latin races.

Metempsychosis is the chief article of faith of the Theosophists.

Fichte, Ulrici, and others think that a progressive evolution must go on in the other life. But such a process, we may urge, must be either finite or infinite. If finite, it is certainly better

to suppose that it ends with our existence on earth; if infinite, or rather indefinite, we encounter the same sort of progress that we discussed in a former chapter. Its attractiveness soon disappears, for it is a progress that never reaches its goal, and consequently can never give contentment. We cannot really love truth if we are always in search of it and never intend to find it.

But, it may be asked, is not a state devoid of all progress dull and monotonous? Will not even the eternal joys and delights of heaven pall upon us? For this reason Volkelt, impressed by the fact that the mind's first function is research, holds that the passive contemplation of God must be excluded from the idea of immortality.

Even if all exertion and disturbance cease, activity may continue to be vigorous and manifold, since to the soul an object of knowledge and love is ever present, unfathomable, and immeasurable in its majesty and beauty. St. Irenaeus says that "God does not cease to instruct the elect, nor do they cease to learn." His riches are boundless, and His power and wisdom know no limits; and so the saints go on from light to light, from love to love, from life to life, for all eternity. Eternal rest is not the immobility of death, but the fresh life raised to its highest vigor of a soul which is ever drinking of the Source of life; such rest is a delight in incessant work, viz., in the perpetual service of God. Activity is the true enjoyment of life, in fact it constitutes life itself. Long continued enjoyment, if inactive, produces satiety, and hence what pleases the senses may lull the soul into a dull sort of contentment for a time, but, unless all its inner vitality slumbers, its blissful state of comfort will give place to oppressive weariness and distaste. Pain and suffering, anxiety and doubt make time seem an eternity, while mirth and endless amusement on the other hand cause exhaustion. Only the habit of regular work makes time pass comfortably, so that, in spite of the monotony of daily occupations, life to most men seems to fly. The blessed, however, are protected from all risk of ennui because they are always active, and their occupation, far from being a burden, is most varied and delightful. The Beatific Vision is like a perpetual sunrise, full of the imperishable charm of radiance that never fails, and the love of God glows incessantly and never cools.

Only an infinite power of thought and will can grasp the fullness of infinite being and life; no created mind will ever be able to comprehend it. If God is abounding enough to occupy Himself with Himself in never-ending bliss, there must surely be enough for a human soul to contemplate and admire in Him for ever.

If the happiness of heaven is to be perfect, it must be eternal. To assert that endless joy must necessarily produce tedium is equivalent to doubting the possibility of the existence of true and perfect bliss. What can be more unnatural than to be afraid of eternal happiness? All that this state of mind proves is that there is no true happiness worthy of permanence imaginable here below; a heart that feels this fear has never felt true happiness, and, indeed, no one in this world really knows what it is.

Nevertheless, we may boldly attempt to picture really perfect bliss, undisturbed by the thought as to whether we shall be able to endure it or not. And here I am reminded of an old story that in its chief features is known all over Europe. In a religious house far in the North lived a monk named Peter, who was of an inquiring habit of mind. One morning, according to his custom, Peter went into a wood close by the monastery, and as he walked, he reflected upon eternity. He pictured it to himself as an infinite series of consecutive periods, and began to wonder whether such a thing would be endurable for a created spirit, in spite of the perpetual happiness found in heaven. He was aroused from his reverie by the sweet song of a little bird, and stopped, listening to the entrancing notes that seemed to come from another world, meanwhile forgetting time, duty, and everything else. When he aroused himself he went back to the monastery thinking that he had spent an hour or two in the wood, but, to his surprise, he found so many changes that he hardly recognized the house and its surroundings. He entered, but failed to discover a familiar face among the brethren; he sought his cell, but in vain. His confusion reached its climax when no one seemed to recognize him; only the archivist and the librarian knew Peter's name, having read that some thousand years before a brother of that name had gone one morning to the wood and had never returned. At last light dawned upon Brother Peter, and he realized that a thousand

years in God's sight are but as yesterday, and no longer doubted the possibility of enduring eternal happiness in heaven.

Finally, we must refer to what is known as the Chiliastic hypothesis, according to which the Messiah will reign for one thousand years on earth. In its crudest form this theory never found admission into the Church, but it was peculiar to many sects. In the early centuries of Christianity Cerinthus, the Marcionites, the Montanists, and others, distorted the Christian expectation of a heavenly kingdom by most unsuitable additions; they were infected with the Jewish tradition of the Messiah, and taught that at His second coming Christ would reign on earth for one thousand years, making Jerusalem the capital of a mighty empire. The just, whether raised from the dead or still alive, would reign with Him, but the ungodly would not rise until the one thousand years had elapsed, when the General Judgment would take place. A distinctly Jewish character was impressed upon this idea of the Golden Age; and people looked forward to a restoration of Judaism, with its altars, sacrifices, laws, and customs, but in addition to the cultus of Jehovah, a distinctly sensual element also found a place in their anticipation.

These hopes and fancies, savoring of Judaism and Epicureanism, found no favor with those of the Catholic teachers who otherwise showed Chiliastic tendencies. They believed in the twofold resurrection and in the thousand years' reign of the Messiah on earth, but they were far from thinking that the inhabitants of this kingdom would enjoy any form of happiness but that which was good and moral.

This form of Chiliasm, free from all taint of grossness, may be traced back to Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia (about 168 A.D.). Papias was a disciple of the apostles, but his theory lacks apostolic sanction. Their divine Master frequently rebuked His disciples for entertaining false hopes regarding the Messiah, and after His Ascension and the descent of the Holy Ghost the apostles finally abandoned all such expectations. All other disciples of the apostles, including Barnabas and Hermas, were free from Chiliasm. Papias was pious rather than learned, but because of the exalted position and sanctity of its author, his opinion, based on a misunderstanding of Holy Scripture, found many adherents, especially in Asia Minor. It was there that Justin, Irenaeus, and Methodius became acquainted with

Chiliastic ideas, whilst Tertullian accepted them from the Montanists, whose sect he joined. It is noteworthy that St. Justin admits the orthodoxy of Christians who rejected Chiliasm, while he himself clung to the theory. Besides the above-mentioned writers, an Egyptian bishop named Nepos, as well as Victorinus bishop of Pettau, and Lactantius were prominent advocates of Chiliasm; of other early theologians some do not mention the subject; others, like Origen and his disciple Dionysius the Great, and Caius, a Roman priest, emphatically maintain a contrary opinion. Hippolytus was attracted by the idea of the reign of a thousand years, but takes all force out of the expectations of Irenaeus and Tertullian by saying that Christ's second coming would take place in a remote future, while for each individual the day of his death is also his last day. After the Council of Nicaea in 325, Chiliasm was suppressed in the Catholic Church, and holy and learned Fathers, like Ephraem, Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory Nazianzen, Epiphanius, Jerome, and Augustine, combated it vigorously.

After it was condemned by the Church, the theory began to die out. The traditions connected with the Sibylline Books, with Pseudo-Ephraem and Pseudo-Methodius, however, survived and caused occasionally great excitement among the masses, especially when mixed up with revolutionary movements affecting Church and State. It is, however, absurd to speak of Chiliasm as tending to anarchy and revolution, or to say that it is the natural outcome of the Christian cosmogony of the Middle Ages. On the contrary, the philosophy of the schoolmen was an efficacious safeguard against the social discontent and the despairing outlook that make the mind peculiarly susceptible to fancies regarding the future. In recent times the sectarian spirit has revived Chiliasm, and it has been accepted to some extent among Baptists, Methodists, Swedenborgians, Irvingites, and the Mormons or Latter Day Saints.

Chiliastic ideas have practically disappeared in the Catholic Church, although some harmless traces of them may linger in popular beliefs. Following St. Thomas, the great theologians, Suarez, Soto, Bellarmine, Cornelius à Lapide, and almost all the moderns, have rejected them. Among Protestants there are very many who still hope for the Millenium, and in England especially the Irvingites have written many works on the subject.

The whole theory is based upon a famous passage in the Apocalypse, where St. John writes (chapter xx): "I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should no more seduce the nations till the thousand years be finished. And after that he must be loosed a little while. And I saw seats; and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them. And the souls of them that were beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and who had not adored the beast nor his image, nor received his character on their foreheads or in their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead lived not till the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; in these the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years shall be finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison and shall go forth and seduce the nations which are over the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, and shall gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they came upon the breadth of the earth and encompassed the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And there came down fire from God out of heaven and devoured them; and the devil, who seduced them, was cast into the pool of fire and brimstone, where both the beast and the false prophet shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. And I saw a great white throne, and one sitting upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was no place found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing in the presence of the throne. And the books were opened, and another book was opened, which was the book of life. And the dead were judged by those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and hell gave up their dead that were in them. And they were judged, every one according to their works. And hell and death were cast into the pool of fire; this is the

second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the pool of fire."

In this chapter St. John, it would seem, is speaking of a twofold resurrection; in the first only the just will take part, and then they will reign with Christ for a thousand years. If the apostle's words are to be taken literally, the morally pure form of Chiliasm would certainly have to be accepted. But according to the recognized principles and rules of Biblical interpretation, this passage ought not to be taken literally, for then it would be at variance not only with other passages of Scripture, where no ambiguity is possible, but also with the unanimous opinion of the Fathers and theologians of the Church, who, with a few isolated exceptions, follow St. Augustine in assigning to this chapter a figurative meaning.

It is stated most clearly in Holy Scripture that on the last day both the righteous and the wicked will rise at the same time from the dead (see John vi. 39, 44, 55 and v. 28; 1 Cor. xv. 52; Dan. xii. 2); thus there cannot be an interval of a thousand years between the two resurrections. Moreover, the just will enter heaven in glory as soon as they rise again (1 Cor. xv. 42, etc.; 1 Thess. iv. 15, 16; Ephes. ii. 5). Consequently we must not look forward to an earthly Messianic kingdom, in which the just, after rising from the dead, will be prepared for the joys of heaven by participating in those of earth; even lawful pleasures, such as eating, drinking, and marrying, being concerned with the senses, are explicitly excluded from the bliss of heaven (Matth. xxii. 3; Rom. xiv. 17).

It is a rule in exegesis that Holy Scripture must be interpreted so that one passage does not contradict another, and therefore the chapter in the Apocalypse must be explained so as to harmonize with the other passages of Holy Scripture to which reference has been made. This is possible only if a symbolical meaning is assigned to it, and this has been universally done in the Church ever since the time of St. Augustine. Accordingly we must understand the first resurrection to refer, not to the body, but to the soul's rising from the death of sin. St. Paul speaks of the soul's re-birth to the life of grace as a resurrection (2 Cor. v. 14 *seqq.*); and like St. John in the Apocalypse, our Saviour alludes to a twofold resurrection: "Amen, amen, I say unto you, that the hour cometh, and now

is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. . . . The hour cometh, wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that have done good things shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; but they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment" (John v. 15–29). The first resurrection mentioned by our Lord cannot be that of the body, since He speaks of it as already taking place, and as limited to those who hear the voice of the Son of God. It must, therefore, be the spiritual resurrection of those who accept His word, the bread of life, and consequently are alive. In contrast to this resurrection, already begun and destined to continue until the end of the world, Christ speaks of another that will be general, and this is the resurrection of the body on the last day.

The thousand years during which Satan will be bound and the just will reign with Christ mean an indefinite period of long duration. The expression is frequently used thus, both by Biblical and profane authors. In a few characteristic touches St. John draws a picture of the time when Satan, after acquiring dominion over mankind by means of idolatry and superstition, is condemned to lose his power. Before the cross of Christ the demons fly in terror, whilst men bow down in awe; the places of sacrifice and the abodes of oracles are doomed to desolation. In the might of Christ all who will can ward off Satan's attacks, and in Christ's triumph all will partake who have been united with Him in love, and have thus become members of His mystical body. Over them the second death, i.e., hell, has no power, because sin has nothing to do with them. They reign with Christ, whereas those who would not hear His voice, and remained spiritually dead, after the lapse of a thousand years fall victims to the second death, and are lost for ever. More perfectly than the members of the Church Militant do those of the Church Triumphant reign with Christ, and those who have loyally borne witness by martyrdom enjoy peculiar distinction.

Before the end of the world the powers of evil will make one last fierce attack upon God's kingdom on earth, and the faithful will be tried to the uttermost. Satan will surround "the camp of the saints and the beloved city" with a mighty host. If we try in the Chiliastic sense to identify this city with

Christ's abode on earth, and the saints with the just who reign with Him, we become involved in hopeless confusion. The beloved city and the saints, who will suffer persecution towards the end of the world, are obviously the Church and her children, and the war, stirred up by Antichrist, is primarily a spiritual conflict, when all imaginable inducements will be offered to Christians, that they may fall away from and deny their faith.

It appears, therefore, that the figurative interpretation of St. John's vision is the only safe and suitable one, and the literal interpretation adopted by the Chiliasts is, if not actually heretical, at least a dangerous error that must be decidedly condemned.

We must, then, abandon the prospect of once more living under purely earthly conditions with beloved departed, but we shall do so readily if we reflect that the highest happiness on earth would be purchased at too high a price if it involved a delay in admission to, or an interruption in, the joys of heaven.

We shall meet again in bodily form shortly before the coming of Christ to judgment, but we know not when that will be. Revelation has told us of certain signs that will portend this great event, but they are not so clearly defined that men can be precluded from discovering the more remote heralds of the last day in almost every age, beginning with that of the apostles. Those who attempt to foretell the end of the world should be warned by the failure of their predecessors. Every crisis in the world's history is marked by extraordinary events, and the beginning of a new era is often a time of warfare, rebellion, murder, lawlessness, persecution, and decay of religion and morals. False Christs and false prophets have arisen in every age. Between Theudas (45 A.D.) and Bar Cochba (131 A.D.) we read of no fewer than sixty-eight who "worked great signs and miracles." Though less numerous, there have been false Christs in subsequent centuries, and, like the ancient Goëtics, the spiritualistic mediums of the present day attempt by means of trickery and fraud to rival the great miracles wrought by our Lord. False prophets prosper most at times of religious or political upheaval. St. Paul, in writing of the antichristian tendency of his age, says: "The mystery of iniquity already worketh . . . and then that wicked one shall be revealed . . .

whose coming is according to the working of Satan, in all power and signs and lying wonders; and in all seduction of iniquity to them that perish, because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (2 Thess. ii. 7–10).

Although in many countries the situation of the kingdom of God on earth is alarming and precarious, yet the assertion that Antichrist has come is rash and unjustifiable, even when it is supposed to be based on revelations made to highly favored persons. No mortal eye can penetrate the mystery of the future, for that is known to God alone. Our Lord did not reveal to us the time of His second coming, and St. Paul's statement on the subject is not really definite. Let us trust to God's wise and loving providence, and hope that, though the present is fraught with sorrow, there will be a better and brighter future; but let us not lose sight of the fact that this world must always be an abode of suffering, and life here is a continued struggle for the happiness of eternity.

St. Thomas remarked that those who foretold the last day had always proved to be false prophets, and the same may be said now. Gross immortality and violent revolutions in Church or State have often caused men of vivid imagination to speak of Antichrist as of a spiritual or secular ruler. In this way arose the remarkable movement of the Joachimists, set on foot about 1200 by Joachim à Fiore.

Milic, who preached repentance in Prague in 1366, is said to have told the Emperor Charles IV to his face that he was the Antichrist. In 1267 Roger Bacon said that forty years previous to that time the appearance of the Avenging Angel had been announced. It was the time when the "Apocalypse of Peter" was attracting much attention in Syria; in it two saviours were promised to come from the east to the Holy Land. The Fifth Lateran Council emphatically forbade any one to assign a definite time to the Last Day, or to identify any person as Antichrist. Nevertheless quite recently Ignatius Waller has fixed 1962 as the beginning of the Millennium. Already in the 11th Century anti-papal predictions of Antichrist were common. The mystical numbers given in the Bible are clearly not intended to enable us to forecast the history of the world. Many attempts have been made to interpret them, but without success.

Not a few books have been written on the subject of a his-

torical interpretation of Biblical prophecies, and in some, whose authors were influenced by polemics or party-spirit, the results are deplorable exhibitions of bad taste and fatuity. It is well known that the Protestant reformers spoke of the Pope as the Antichrist, "the man of sin, the son of perdition, who opposeth and is lifted up . . . so that he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself as if he were God" (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4). Recent Protestant theologians, out of respect for the principles of rational interpretation of the Bible, have discarded the violent invectives of their fanatical co-religionists, in spite of their dislike for the papacy. The Protestant writer, Luthardt, says that to apply all these designations to the Pope would be an injustice to the Holy See, and an unwarrantable interpretation of the Apostle's words. Protestant writers of inferior rank, however, think they must adhere to the preposterous theory that the Pope is Antichrist as to a precious tradition.

CHAPTER XV

PURGATION BEYOND THE GRAVE

Heed not the form of pain that sins procure;
Think of what follows; think if worst should be,
Beyond the Judgment it shall not endure."
'Pain,' said I: 'consolation' I should say;
For that same will, that leads us to the tree,
Made Christ to utter *Eli* joyously,
When with His blood He made our spirits free.

DANTE, *Purg.* X, 109; XXII, 72, trans. Longfellow.

ST. AUGUSTINE tells us that we must suffer loving friends to mourn over the loss of their dear ones, and not debar them from the relief of tears; yet these tears must be dried, and their grief soothed, by the belief that the just, when their debt to nature is paid, will enter a better life, and are separated from us only for a little while. Thus the consoling prospect of the eternal light and peace that our dear ones will enjoy ought not to be obscured by the gloomy thought of the judgment; a mourner should hope, not fear, for the friends whom he has lost.

Nevertheless our happy confidence regarding the salvation of any dear soul is, in most cases, shaken by the certainty that nothing unclean can enter heaven, and that no one can attain to the glorious liberty of the children of God who has not previously paid all his debts to the uttermost farthing. Who is so perfect as to need no purification when he passes into the next world? "Who can say: 'My heart is clean, I am pure from sin'?" (Prov. xx. 9). It is true that in this life we have many means of purification, and of them all death is the last and best if it is accepted with submission as from God's hand. He who willingly offers his life as a sacrifice to the Lord of life and death, and bears with patience all the suffering connected with this sacrifice, may well hope for mercy. Therefore a true Christian asks for the prolongation, rather than for a speedy end

of his death agony, saying, "Here cut, here burn, O Lord; but have mercy upon me in eternity." No seed grows so quickly, and bears such abundant fruit, as that which is sown by the contrition of the dying. A soul thirsting for the joys of eternity would not lose a single one of the few moments still given it by God, for they are rich in grace. Instead of interrupting such a one by outbursts of unrestrained grief, we should pray for and with him, and encourage him to have patience yet a little longer, thus to reap a more plentiful harvest.

Many theologians, including Cardinal Bellarmine, think that very few have completed their purification by the end of this life. There are only two ways to heaven — that of innocence and that of penance; the former is narrow and steep, and few travel by it; the latter is rough and irksome, and most men shrink from it, though whoever has abandoned the direct road to his goal must take the other, tedious and painful route. What just man has followed the footsteps of his divine Master so faithfully as never to have gone astray or stumbled? What penitent has so fully paid all his debts to God's justice that nothing more can be required of him? Stains not removed even by humble resignation at death must be wiped out in the other life. We know that as soon as the soul of a just man is set free from the body it is filled with such intense love of God, its highest good, that no trace of guilt is left; only the temporal punishment for sin must still be undergone. Hence it is only very rarely that fear of purgatory is altogether absent from a confident hope of heaven. All may, and most must, prepare for this purification, and they will find consolation in it if they are truly penitent. The thought of purification has both its alarming and its comforting side, and our sojourn in purgatory will be cheering as well as painful.

According to Catholic doctrine there is a state and a place of purification, in the sense in which we speak of space in the other life (see page 260). The faithful on earth can help the souls detained there by means of prayers, Masses, alms, and other good works. This article of faith was laid down by the Council of Lyons in 1274, and by that of Florence in 1439, and was confirmed by the Council of Trent.

Apart from certain sects that held erroneous doctrines concerning the state of the soul after death, the faith in purgatory

was for many centuries quite universal. It was challenged by Aërius, the Waldensians, the Petrobrusians, and the *Apostolici,* a sect originating near Cologne in the 12th Century. It is uncertain whether the Armenians can be charged with denying the existence of purgatory; there is no mention of such a denial in the decree of union signed by the Armenian envoys on Nov. 22, 1439.

On this subject there was no essential difference between the Latin and the Greek Church. The two chief authors of the eastern schism, Photius, in his encyclical of 867, and Michael Caerularius, in his letter to Bishop John of Trani in 1053, say nothing about it. A new cause for contention was discovered in the middle of the 13th Century, when both parties began to confuse opinions of theologians with the doctrines of the Church. The Greeks maintained that the purification was not to be effected by *fire,* as they considered that such an assumption would threaten the doctrine of eternal punishment in hell. Still more did they object to the gruesome and absurd accounts of purgatory put forth by some of the scholastic theologians. The word "fire" need not, however, be understood literally, though it is used in the Roman Catechism. Whatever Leo Allatius and other scholars may say to the contrary, the Church has defined nothing about the nature, place, and duration of the process of purification. The vague statement made by the Second Council of Lyons and by that of Florence was repeated in similar language by Gregory XIII, Urban VIII, and Benedict XIV. According to it, we do not know how, where, or how long the holy souls suffer. Revelation gives us no clear indications as to the form or the duration of their sufferings, nor do we know whether they undergo chastisement by means of material fire, in spite of the separation that has taken place between these souls and their bodies.

Neither private revelations nor the assertions of theologians can give us any certainty in all these matters. Most of the early Fathers speak of cleansing fires, but we cannot tell whether this means actual or spiritual fire; in fact, several incline to the latter meaning.

Most of the scholastics follow St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure, and think that the flames of purgatory resemble the fire we know in this world; moreover some writers delighted in rais-

ing a number of useless questions, and asked whether the souls are tortured by means of snow, ice, and poisonous or savage beasts. Unlike these earlier writers, many strictly orthodox theologians of more recent date venture to express it as their opinion that the fires of purgatory must be understood as a mere figure of speech.

Hell fire, however, will, after the last day, be real fire, though not necessarily such as is usually described, for we know nothing as to its origin and nature. The supposition that it does not attack men's bodies from without, but is kindled and continually kept burning by the soul itself, is not contrary either to Holy Scripture or tradition. The glorified body receives its splendor from the soul, and in the same way the bodies of the lost will contain within themselves the conflagration which is their punishment. In the Bible this instrument of divine vengeance is called the sinner's own work. "I will bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, to devour thee" (Ezech. xxviii. 18). In commenting on these words Bossuet says: "I will not bring it against thee from afar, but it shall be kindled in thy conscience; the flames will burst forth from thy heart, owing to thy sins. Remember, my brethren, when you sin, you are forging the implements for your own eternal torture; nevertheless you go on forging them, you drink in sin like water, and swallow streams of fire." Our own experience bears out this view of hell. Every passionate desire or impulse, and especially the frenzy of anger and despair, set the body, as it were, on fire, a fire that betrays itself in the flashing eyes, the flushed face, and the coursing of the blood through the veins. What burning heat must consume a body whose soul is filled with eternal shame, bitterness, fury, and despair!

As early a writer as Plutarch pointed out that those who are tormented by internal cold or fire suffer more than others whose pain is external. The body feels alternations of heat and cold when the conscience is disturbed, and hence Dante places icy cold, as well as burning heat, among the torments of hell. This conception of hell fire obviates the difficulty of understanding how not only each individual body, but also each member of that body, can suffer in proportion to its participation in moral guilt. Thus is fulfilled the saying, "By what things a man sinneth, by the same also he is tormented" (Wisd. xi. 17).

The declaration of union between East and West, published at Lyons and signed by the Emperor and the bishops of the Greeks, did not effect a perfect reconciliation, but even those Greeks who were most antagonistic to the Roman Church were fairly orthodox on the subject of purgatory. The long dispute at the Council of Florence concerned the nature, not the existence, of a place of purification. How firmly the Greek Church in subsequent ages adhered to the old tradition, in spite of its complete breach with the Western Church, is shown by the failure of the German reformers, Melanchthon, Clyträus, and others, to effect a union with it. Even Cyrillus Lukaris (*ob.* 1638), a frank advocate of Calvinism, refused to abandon the doctrine of purgatory. The synod assembled in 1642 at Jassy by Peter Mogilas, metropolitan of Kiev, accepted the explicit profession of faith in purgatory, and its decree was confirmed later by the synod at Constantinople, as well as by that assembled by Dositheus at Jerusalem in 1672. This last-mentioned synod incurred suspicions of having a Latinizing tendency, for on many points of doctrine it plainly approximated to the Roman Church. The doctrine of purgatory was included in the catechisms of the Eastern Churches, although it is omitted from the Greek catechism published in 1834 at Munich, by Plato Hieromonachus.

The reformers of the 16th Century emphatically condemned this doctrine; Luther had not at first any intention of denying it, and even declared that he had decided to accept it. In his argument with Eck he professed his firm belief in purgatory, and said that he was convinced from Holy Scripture of its existence. But in 1530 he published his *Disavowal of Purgatory,* having seen that there was no place for this doctrine in his scheme of justification. Calvin rejected all idea of purgatory, but Melanchthon, a man of milder disposition, tolerated prayers for the dead. From the standpoint of the Protestant teaching on justification, according to which the sinner has Christ's justice imputed to him by merely believing in His name, there is no excuse for retaining it. On the other hand, a soul whose sins are only hidden, not removed, requires real cleansing, since nothing unclean can enter heaven. Consequently Luther was driven to the expedient of ascribing a cleansing power to the hour of death, and his view has been adopted by Delitzsch and

others. Möhler, however, says that he cannot understand how the sinful soul can be purified from sin by laying aside the body. "Are we," he asks, "to imagine this purification to be effected by some command of God, or by some powerful, mechanical process? Protestant theology seems unconsciously to assume that a sudden magical transformation takes place. . . . If God had intended to employ a process of this kind, Christ need not have been born." Strauss remarks, "Möhler is right in regarding purification by means of death as a mechanical operation, and so is Schleiermacher in seeing in it a magic process; and both are right in regarding it as a violent interruption in the independent development of human life."

This gap in Protestant theology was recognized long ago by Leibnitz, Lessing, Swedenborg, Jung-Stilling, and others. They all assume that there is a middle state of souls resembling what Catholics call purgatory, and they consider the word *purgatory* very well suited to describe it. Hase says that most people, when they die, are probably too good for hell, and certainly too bad for heaven. He confesses that there is great obscurity on this subject in the teaching of the Protestant reformers. Horst writes: "Nothing in the whole of nature happens *per saltum,* and this is true also of the human soul. Where are those who can pass into the other life without any imperfection or frailty? . . . What can we say of those whose conversion takes place only on their death-bed? . . . Must not for them an intermediate state of purification be both necessary and beneficial?" In spite of all their protests against the Catholic doctrine of purgatory, we find something very like it in the writings of many Protestants. They deny, as a rule, that the sufferings of this intermediate state have any power to atone and make satisfaction, and also that intercession for the dead is of any efficacy, but they believe that souls ripen there and attain perfection through faith in Jesus Christ (Oertel, *Hades,* p. 181). If this growth or ripening is regarded as a continuation of our training on earth, with a view of endorsing the theory that the punishments of hell are conditional, and not really eternal, this Protestant idea of the intermediate state is plainly antagonistic to Holy Scripture, and dangerous to morals; as is the case also if the possibility of repentance and conversion, the final choice between good and evil, is transferred to the intermediate state.

Even Paul Tschackert is forced to admit: "We must grant that the Catholics are right; there is absolute inconsistency in saying that any one can enter heaven when stained with sin, whether it be covered or uncovered. Hence we, too, believe that when sin is forgiven it has to be obliterated after death, and that a good Christian makes expiation in the next world. In this condition of purification it is quite impossible for a man to expiate his sins by his own efforts, but, just as the sun melts the snow in spring, so will the love of Christ, when it touches the soul, melt away all sin, and thus a believer is freed from sin after death by means of grace and nothing else, whilst he is in a transition state."

From a strictly Protestant point of view prayers for the dead are excluded, but here and there the force of the old tradition and the needs of sorrowing hearts prove too strong for consistency with dogma, and a "pectoral theology" has been developed that in many respects runs counter to official theology.

In 1510 Luther expressed his sorrow that his parents had not yet died, "so that he might release them from purgatory by Masses and other good works and prayers." He always tolerated intercession for the departed, and said: "As Holy Scripture contains nothing on the subject, I maintain that it is not sin to pray for the dead, through spontaneous devotion, or to say: 'Dear God, if the soul be in such a state as to be helped, have mercy upon it.' But when this has been done once or twice, that is enough." Melanchthon, in his *Apology* (art. 24 *de missa*), and Bugenhagen, in the Brunswick ritual, allow prayer for the dead, but Calvin forbids it. It is rejected by most Protestants of the old school, but more recent writers are divided between their own feelings and respect for authority. They try to satisfy the former without abandoning the latter, and so they have begun to pray, not for the relief of the dead, but for the consolation of the living. Chemnitz is wrong in representing this as the custom in the early Church. Döderlein writes: "Does it not seem ridiculous to pray at the grave for a soul that cannot benefit by my prayers? . . . Well, laugh, if you like, but to me this expression of love in such solemn surroundings is full of consolation." Similarly Karsten says: "Prayer cannot help them to heaven, nor release them from hell, but it is useful and necessary for us."

Human sentiment and regard for the teaching of the ancient Church have so far prevailed over the opinions of their Protestant authorities that many non-Catholics pray privately, if not publicly, for the dead. If such prayer has any justification at all, it must inevitably be connected with the idea of purification in the intermediate state, and Bishop Martensen of Seeland, and others, make no secret of this being their opinion. We must acknowledge, however, that Protestants are right in calling this doctrine an innovation, and a rash departure from the strict dogmatic and liturgical limitations of the early reformers. On the other hand, those who hold it enjoy the advantage of being supported by the unanimous tradition of the Church and the ideas of non-Christian nations.

In the Persian Avesta the soul even of a just man is said to spend the first three nights after death in praying for salvation. "If anything still remains, so that my sin is not yet expiated, I am contented with and acquiesce in the three nights' punishment" (*Khorda Avesta,* 45, 23; 46, 29). In the *Vendidad* (19, 122) there is an allusion to a middle world. Further evidence of the Persian belief in purgatory is derived from the custom of offering prayers and sacrifices for the dead, quite in accordance with Catholic practice. These offerings are made on the day of burial, on the 30th day after it, and on the anniversary; perhaps this custom was borrowed from the Syrian Church. The Babylonians and Assyrians certainly believed in a middle state. On the twelfth and last tablet of the great Izdubar legend, discovered by George Smith, Heabani's spirit is said to be sent first to a gloomy, terrible place, and afterwards, at the request of his friend, Izdubar, admitted to the land of the blessed. The peculiar opinions of the Egyptians on the state of purification after death are revealed in their doctrine of the three thousand years' wandering of the soul. The ancient Chinese and Japanese, as well as most nations of middle and northern Asia, believed in a place of penance and purification. Many points of resemblance to the Catholic doctrine of purgatory occur in the ideas of the future life current among Jews, Mahometans, Greeks, Romans, and the Germanic tribes, all of whom had some belief in a middle state in which sin was expiated, and the suffering souls were helped by the intercessory prayer of people in this world. Both their funeral customs and

sacrifices for the dead were intended to afford comfort, consolation, and peace to the departed, and, as I have already said, this desire is found even among savage tribes.

Thiersch rightly remarks: "I am not going too far if I assert that it is possible to prove the existence of almost a *consensus gentium* in favor of belief in a place of purification for departed souls, distinct from the abode of the lost. A tendency to this belief is innate in man, and through the mysterious echoes that in every age have penetrated from the gloomy realm of the dead into the land of the living, this belief has continually been renewed, and will always continue to reappear." Lütkemüller, another Protestant, was so much impressed by this agreement between the Catholic doctrine of purgatory and the religious feeling prevailing among all nations that he became a Catholic.

According to Plato in *Gorgias* and *Phaedo,* Rhadamanthus, the judge of the lower world, summons each soul to appear before him, and having examined it, assigns to it reward or punishment, according to its deserts. The penance imposed benefits those only whose offences can be made good, whereas those condemned for incurable sins have to suffer cruel torment for ever. In view of such passages Calvin, Chemnitz, Gerhard, and many other Protestants have not hesitated to revive against the Church of the patristic age the reproach first raised by Faustus, the Manichaean, who declared that she had adopted the doctrine of purgatory, and the practice of praying for the dead, "from the ideas and ceremonial of paganism."

In answer to this accusation we may quote the Protestant theologian Frantz, who is opposed to the Catholic doctrine. He writes: "We cannot suppose that men like Tertullian, Ambrose and Augustine would have been totally blind or indifferent to the introduction of pagan customs, yet they all regard prayers for the dead as an old practice in the Church, in which they could have discovered no pagan element, and they would have sternly condemned abuses savoring of paganism. People should not be so eager to accuse a Church, that for 300 years purchased and saved her independence and character with the blood of martyrs, of contaminating herself with pagan abominations, unless they are at least equally ready to praise her for maintaining her traditions in such purity. The congregational

system and cultus of the Church required definite forms and organization for its development and activity, since without such forms and organization the Church could hardly be said to have a visible existence. . . . The apostles laid stress, not upon stagnation, but upon growth, and in the centuries following the apostolic age there was no lack of men able to discriminate between innovations due to foreign influence and the natural development of the seed sown by the apostles. They were loyal and bold enough to reject the former and to cherish the latter. They perceived the risk of subjective and arbitrary action, and to hold this in check was no doubt one of their chief aims in organizing the exterior life and cultus of the Church. . . . Both in their contents and in the fact that they form part of the official cultus, prayers for the dead are a thoroughly Christian institution, and a possession of the Christian Church."

The fact that a doctrine is not exclusively Christian, but belongs more or less to all religions, is no proof that it originally was unknown to Christianity; on the contrary, it must, if true, be recognized as a part of the Christian faith. Christianity is the sun among religions, and the various pagan systems are the clouds drifting to and fro and absorbing a few rays of the sun's light. It would be foolish to regard the bright edges of the clouds as true sources of light, and it is equally wrong to regard pagan lands illumined by the Sun of everlasting truth, the λογός σπερματικός, as the sources of Christian truth. Such a confusion is an unpardonable and incomprehensible anachronism, now that the sun has revealed its full strength, breaking through and dispersing the clouds, so that the eye can survey the space that they once occupied, and pass far beyond them into the infinity of the sun's pure radiance. Christianity contains all the gleams of truth, goodness, and beauty that occur in pagan religions; it brings them into focus and reveals the Source of their light to the eye that is in search of truth.

Frantz is right in saying that prayers for the dead date back to apostolic times, but he is mistaken in thinking that Holy Scripture contains nothing in support of the practice.

We may pass over a number of passages which some theologians suppose to contain an allusion to Purgatory and prayer for the dead (Ps. xxxvii, 2; lxv. 12; Isaias iv. 4; ix. 18; Mich. vii. 8; Zach. ix. 11; 1 Kings xxxi. 13; 2 Kings i. 12; Job. iv. 18;

Ecclus. vii. 37; Malach. iii. 2), and mention only those where the reference to one or the other subject is clear and explicit.

The classical passage in the Old Testament occurs in the Second Book of Machabees, which, though not regarded by Protestants as canonical, nevertheless is considered even by them to be very valuable as a perfectly genuine record of Jewish faith. The apocryphal books, known as the Pseudo-Henoch and the Pseudo-Ezra, in which Platonic ideas of the other world occur, also bear witness to this faith, as well as the writings of profane authors. The story of Judas Machabeus, as told in Holy Scripture, is this: — On the day after his brilliant victory over Gorgias, the ruler of Idumaea, Judas proceeded to bury the bodies of the Jews who had fallen in battle, and beneath their upper garments ornaments and tokens relating to pagan deities were discovered. As the law forbade Jews to possess such things, it seemed plain that these men had been killed as a punishment for transgressing the law. Judas and his companions, therefore, praised God's judgment, and prayed for forgiveness for those whom He had stricken. Judas organized a collection of 12,000 silver drachmas, and sent the money to Jerusalem, to provide for the sacrifice of a sin-offering, "thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection," which the Jews connected with the idea of immortality. The inspired writer expresses his approval of this token of piety, and says, "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins" (2 Mach. xii. 46). To the present day the Jews have retained their belief in a purification after death, and they pray regularly for the departed. In their synagogues are plates bearing the names of the dead, who are remembered in prayer on several successive Sabbaths. The Jewish prayer for a deceased father is as follows: "May God remember the soul of my dear departed father for his salvation, and allow the offering that I make to secure him a blessing, so that his soul may be admitted to the company of those who live for ever, to the company of the souls of our forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and of Sara, Rebecca, Rachel and Lea, as well as to that of the souls of all the faithful departed, who enjoy immortality in the better world." A special prayer is prescribed to be said on the anniversary of a death.

The New Testament contains more passages regarding prayer

for the dead than the Old. The possibility of the remission of sin in the other life is stated clearly. "He that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come" (Matth. xii. 32). Hahn remarks on this passage that our Lord implies that there are sins which can be forgiven after the close of the time of grace on earth; these are not sins of unbelievers, who were not converted in this life, but sins of persons converted, who departed this life in a state of grace, although not completely free from moral defects. "The prison from which there is no release until the last farthing has been repaid" (Matth. v. 26) is supposed by many theologians to be the place of purification, although such an interpretation is doubtful. The same remark applies to our Lord's advice to make friends of the mammon of iniquity, in order to secure friends in the next world. Bellarmine and Suarez follow St. Augustine in their explanation of these words, and base upon them a hope that for those who are zealous in works of mercy here below the time of purification may be shortened and relieved by the intercession of the saints in heaven and of the just on earth. More recent commentators, however, with equal right, think that the words refer only to the grace of a happy death, which will be bestowed on the liberal almsgiver.

In Holy Scripture there are allusions to the assistance which the living can render to the dead. Tertullian says that in the Church of Corinth existed a peculiar custom, adopted also by the Marcionites and Cerinthians, of baptizing living persons in the place of, or in the name of dead persons, especially dead relatives, who had departed this life without being baptized. To this St. Paul refers when he speaks (1 Cor. xv. 29) of being "baptized for the dead." This was done, no doubt, with the good intention of enabling them nevertheless to share in the communion and intercessions of the Church. If this idea of baptism by proxy is extended to a transference of works of penance, or even of martyrdom (baptism of blood), for the benefit of the dead, the importance of this passage is increased.

We read in Holy Scripture of purification by fire in the other life. St. Paul writes: "If any man build upon this foundation (Jesus Christ) gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be manifest; for the day of the Lord

shall declare it, because it shall be revealed in fire. And the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. If any man's work abide, which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work burn, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire" (1 Cor. iii. 12–15).

These words suggest, though they do not explicitly mention, purification after death. The work of which the apostle speaks is primarily the preaching of God's word, and secondarily, every good work based on the foundation which is Christ. The degree of goodness will be revealed on the day of the General Judgment. The Greek Fathers Athanasius, Chrysostom, Theophylact, etc., think that St. Paul refers to hell fire, but St. Augustine refutes this theory by pointing out that the man who builds is represented as saved. The fire is, in the first instance, the end of the world, but St. Paul is certainly speaking figuratively when he ascribes to this fire power to test and cleanse the moral works of the Corinthian teachers, and says that it will find nothing to burn in the case of one man, and much in that of another. He expresses himself as though the teachers in Corinth would be there at the last day; but the warning that is given to them applies to all men who are alive then. Like a fire will the judgment bring to light each man's works, testing them to find out whether they are of noble metal, capable of resisting fire or not. Those which are defective are, as it were, made of wood, hay, or stubble, and these the fire will consume. But as a man and his work cannot be separated, the fire will test, prove, or consume him also. Pain is caused, not by the outward loss in itself, not by the destruction of a worthless building which to some extent disfigures its sacred foundation, but rather by the remembrance of past follies, of wasted time and labor, and of the lavish expenditure on unprofitable works. The knowledge, too, that by his own fault he has no store of merit, and consequently will receive but little reward, is like fire burning in his soul. Yet such painful knowledge has power to purify, and is therefore wholesome, and the man who possesses it is saved, "yet so as by fire"; he is like one who during a conflagration suffers loss of property and receives grievous wounds.

We must notice also that on the last day the purification must precede the Judge's sentence, for when once the sentence

is given, there can be no more temporal, purifying punishment, but only such as is eternal and avenging. Further, it should be remembered that the Apostle, when referring to purification on the last day, does not exclude a purification that begins earlier, immediately after death. Apart from the fact that some souls will be undergoing purification until the day of judgment, those who are still alive at Christ's second coming cannot be purified until just before the judgment, and St. Paul seems to be thinking of the latter class. The last day, when every man's work will be made manifest and be tried by fire, is the day of the Lord for *all*. For each individual that day dawns, and the examination and purification begin immediately after death (St. Jerome, *Comment in Joel,* c. 2). Those who come to the last day still burdened with venial sin for which they have not done penance can only be saved "so as by fire," and all who died previously in that state must also be purified before their admission to heaven. It is impossible to refute this deduction from St. Paul's words, and there is no justification for assuming that they refer to any material fire consuming the body.

The existence of a place of temporal punishment and penance is mentioned by St. Peter, who says that Christ preached to the spirits in prison, viz., to the souls of those who perished in the deluge (1 Peter iii. 19, 20; iv. 6). The earlier Protestant commentators interpreted this preaching in the sense of condemnation; the later prefer to think that it aimed at conversion, but it was really the message of salvation and release carried by our Lord to the souls in limbo and purgatory. Christ's soul, being separated from His body, went down to limbo, to announce to the just men of the old dispensation that their redemption was accomplished, and that they would soon enter heaven, now reopened to mankind. Among them there were no doubt some who had perished in the great Deluge, for it is arbitrary and unreasonable to suppose that all who died in the Deluge died impenitent. Their reckless jests at Noe's rebukes must surely have ceased when their punishment followed, slowly indeed, but irresistibly. Many must have repented when brought face to face with a horrible death, and, as the waters rose higher and higher, they must have turned to God in faith and contrition, and have implored forgiveness, hoping in the future Messiah, whose coming had been foretold in Paradise. Although

they had to die as the temporal punishment for their former vicious way of life and obstinate unbelief, they may still have found mercy and have narrowly escaped condemnation. If all the circumstances be taken into consideration, we may think it probable that they did not pay off all their debt before death; they had sinned grievously, and their lack of patience and submission diminished the power to make satisfaction which their violent death might otherwise have had. They must have continued their penance in the other life, pining in the prison where those sinners, whose salvation is assured, are confined. Here they awaited their Redeemer's coming, and He, who in His boundless love and mercy had just pardoned the penitent thief, remitting all the temporal punishment due to his sins, was surely not less generous to the prisoners in limbo.

No doctrine is supported by a more brilliant array of witnesses belonging to the early Church than that of purgatory. Nevertheless many of its opponents follow Schroekh and accuse Pope Gregory (*ob.* 604) of having "invented" purgatory. It would hardly be possible to make an accusation more completely at variance with historical truth.

The beautiful custom of praying and making offerings for the dead prevailed throughout the whole Church long before the time of Gregory the Great. The very earliest Councils issued decrees on the subject (*Concil. Karthagin.* iii. (*a.* 397), cap. 29; iv. (*a.* 398), cap. 79, 95; *Conc. Bracarense* iii. (*a.* 572), cap. 10).

In the Latin Church intercession for the dead was zealously practised and recommended by Tertullian (*ob.* about 240), Cyprian (*ob.* 258), Ambrose (*ob.* 397), Sulpicius Severus (*ob.* about 406), Jerome (*ob.* 420), Paulinus of Nola (*ob.* about 431), Augustine (*ob.* 430), Victor of Vita (after 487), Caesarius of Arles (*ob.* 542), and Fulgentius Ferrandus (*ob.* about 550). In St. Augustine's *Confessions* we have a prayer for his dead mother, St. Monica, and even non-Catholics regard this as a noble testimony to his piety, faith, and filial love. The Protestant Frantz writes: "This is a beautiful, earnest prayer, but no one can assert that a Protestant would pray thus. It is absolutely Catholic, and breathes throughout the spirit of Catholic thought, the glow of faith lights up the wood of works. . . . So we have no hesitation in saying that in this prayer

of Augustine's we have a standard by which to measure the difference between Protestantism and Catholicism. We find that, as early as Augustine's time, Catholicism had begun a development which, when complete, evoked the opposition of the reformers."

The same belief and practice were sanctioned by the Greek Fathers and writers, viz., Clement of Alexandria (*ob.* about 217), Eusebius (*ob.* about 340), Cyril of Jerusalem (*ob.* 386), Ephraem the Syrian (*ob.* about 379), Epiphanius (*ob.* 403), John Chrysostom (*ob.* about 406), Theodoret (*ob.* about 458), Pseudo-Dionysius (*ob.* 500), Eustrathius (*ob.* 582), John Climacus (*ob.* about 600), and John of Damascus (*ob.* about 760).

According, however, to the well-known *dictum* of Pope Celestine, it is the public prayer of the Church which supplies the easiest and surest means of ascertaining her faith. From the very beginning of Christianity the supplications of the Eucharistic sacrifice have been used at the burial of the dead. Tertullian and St. Cyprian speak of this custom as universal and ancient. We must assume that in the course of time a fixed form of prayer was employed and prescribed. Tertullian says that a widow prayed that her deceased husband might enjoy relief and participate in the blessed resurrection. Similar expressions occur in the oldest liturgical prayers of the Sacramentaries. The ancient formula, "May God grant that thy lot may be with His saints," occurs in St. Polycarp's Epistle to the Philippians and in the Acts of his martyrdom. We cannot doubt, therefore, that it was very early regarded as a form of prayer sanctioned by the Church.

The complete forms of prayer for the dead occur first in the ancient liturgies that have been preserved in manuscript; such as the two liturgies ascribed to St. James the apostle (Fabricius, *cod. apocr. tom.* iii. p. 93 *sq.*, 134 *sq.*), the two ascribed to St. Mark (*ibid.* p. 284 *sq.*, 319 *sq.*), the liturgy of the holy apostles (*ibid.* p. 330 *sq.*), the liturgies of St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil, collected by Goar, those ascribed to St. Peter and St. Matthew, the Mozarabic and the Armenian liturgies, and that of St. Ambrose. There can be no doubt that many of the prayers that have come down to us in the oldest collections really date from an earlier period, especially those which are more or less identical in wording with the invocations and

prayers found in epitaphs of the 2d, 3d, and 4th centuries. This is particularly true of the prayer for the dead now used at Mass, in the whole of which there is hardly a single expression that does not occur in epitaphs of the 3d Century, either in the form of the invocations, or in some other part of these inscriptions.

Even the stones bear witness to the faith in purgatory of the early Church, as it is frequently mentioned in inscriptions and prayers on the tombstones of early Christians. The ornaments on the tombs in the catacombs are plainly the outcome of two dogmas, the one being that we should pray for the dead, who benefit by our intercession, and the other that the saints are our advocates with God. The invocations and prayers occurring in early Christian inscriptions are undoubtedly of an intercessory character, and show that the living sought to assist the dead. Epitaphs of the second century express the wish that the soul may rest in peace, in comfort, and be with God, Christ, and the saints, and they express confident assurance of being heard by God. Christians would never have thought of using these prayers and of inscribing them on tombs unless they had been convinced of their efficacy. They were inspired by the same hope that Tertullian and St. Cyprian felt. The prayers on tombs are echoes of the prayers forming part of the Mass, which was offered for the dead at funerals and on anniversaries, and they have the same meaning. We have epitaphs dating from the Second Century, in which the departed are represented as asking for the prayers of the faithful, and the supplications seem to be the answer to this request.

We shall not discuss the famous Abercius inscription, though its Christian character cannot any longer be doubted. It will be enough to refer to two important pieces of evidence from the catacomb of St. Priscilla in Rome. These are the epitaphs over two women, one named Marcia and the other Agape; they are almost identical in form, and seem to be quoted from some ancient poem containing a request for prayers: — "I beseech you, my brethren, when you come hither to pray, remember your dear Agape, so that Almighty God may preserve Agape for ever and ever." This shows that the Christians of the primitive Church used regularly to visit graves and pray there, with the intention and hope of doing good to their dead friends.

We can, therefore, well understand why Tertullian, St. Cyprian, St. Clement of Alexandria, and Origen all speak of faith in the efficacy of intercession for the dead, and the custom of praying for them, as common to all Christians.

In order to avoid the difficulty of having to reject such a mass of evidence, Chemnitz suggests that the prayers and offerings for the dead, common in the early Church, were not intended to help the departed, but to honor their memory and console the survivors. He thinks that St. Augustine and St. John Chrysostom already deviated from the original intention and yielded to the opinions of the people who were favorably inclined toward the theories of Plato and Origen. This expedient has been adopted by many non-Catholic writers besides Chemnitz, and, as we have already seen, Pope Gregory the Great is charged with having finally brought to completion that departure from Catholic tradition and practice in which St. Augustine is said to have led the way.

We may quote another Protestant in reply to these views. Kliefoth says: "That intercessory prayer is not well suited to express certainty of an unquestionable happiness of the departed, or to assure the mourners of the same, is an obvious fact. . . . The attitude of the Church towards the dead was, from the earliest time of which we have accurate knowledge, essentially and emphatically one of prayer *pro iis eorumque animabus,* and that prayer was consequently an official act, not yet made to the dead, but for the dead. We ought not to outrage truth by denying this fact for one motive or another. . . . On the contrary, the Church in the age of Tertullian had already firmly adopted the principle that she was acting on behalf of the dead. This principle is not of later origin. . . . All ecclesiastical writers of the time of Tertullian and later speak of intercession for the dead as of something that is quite a matter of course, and take it for granted that prayer is no less beneficial to the souls of the dead than of the living." Leibbrand and Frantz write in the same strain; the latter remarks: "Oblations for the dead were regarded really as sacrifices, whereby those who offered them hoped to secure forgiveness for their own sins and for those of the dead, and people were firmly convinced that these sacrifices could affect the condition of the departed."

The universal custom of praying for the dead presupposes an equally universal belief in their being so circumstanced as to benefit by these prayers. The Church does not pray for the saints because they do not need our prayers, nor for the damned, because they are unworthy of them; therefore, according to the intentions of the ancient Church, her intercession is for the good of those dead, who both need it and are worthy of it. These are the souls in purgatory, for whom the Church prays that they may be released from their pain.

Never has the Church prayed for the lost souls, and although a few of the Fathers sanction prayer for them also, it is not for their release, but only for a small mitigation of their suffering. In the ancient liturgies the saints were commemorated in the memento of the dead; not in order to ensure or increase their happiness, but to thank God for having glorified Himself in them, and to ask their intercession on behalf of the souls still in purgatory. St. Augustine says that prayers for the dead are thanksgivings in the case of the very good; intercessions in the case of the not very bad; and if they bring no help to the departed, in the case of the very wicked, they are at least a source of comfort to the survivors. Over and above this practical evidence of the antiquity of belief in purgatory, there is a great deal of doctrinal evidence occurring in the works of writers who lived before St. Gregory the Great. Cyprian, Ambrose, Lactantius, Hilary, and Augustine, among the Latin Fathers, and Origen, Clement of Alexandria, Basil, both Gregories, Isidore of Pelusium and Theodoret in the Greek Church, all explicitly teach that there is, in the other life, a chastisement that purifies. They speak of a cleansing fire, not indeed for all sins, but only for venial sins, "for the faults committed, not out of conscious malice, but through negligence and frailty" (Ambros., *in Ps.* 118); for "such sins as have already been acknowledged with contrition in confession" (Basil. *in cap.* 9 *Isai.*). This chastisement, they declare, is provided not for the ungodly, but for Christians who are to be saved, for the servants of God who have done much penance, who have had Christ as their foundation, and have led just lives. The punishment in purgatory is invariably sharply distinguished from everlasting damnation.

We do not know where, what, or for how long the holy souls

suffer; these are mysteries about which the Church has to leave us in uncertainty, since God in His wisdom has not seen fit to enlighten us. It is enough for us to know that, heaven being our true home, the exclusion from heaven must be full of anguish, and that those souls who on account of sins unexpiated cannot yet gain admission there suffer grievously, with regard to their moral condition as well as with reference to God's infinite perfections. Neither the Fathers nor the Doctors of the Church have ever agreed as to whether the flames of purgatory are material or symbolical and spiritual. Those who think that they are material assert unanimously that the fire is quite unlike our fires of wood or coal, and consequently we can form no clear idea of it.

Unhappily there are many descriptions and pictures of purgatory which not only offend against all good taste but are also theologically unwarranted. They supply the enemies of Christianity with a welcome excuse for charging the Church with inhumanity and oppression of mind. Hence the Council of Trent very wisely forbade difficult and subtle topics, that do not tend to edification, to be discussed in books for the people. "The bishops must not allow unwarranted and questionable ideas about purgatory to become current; they must condemn all that panders to superstition or base commerce as being an object of offence and scandal" (Trid. Sess. xv. *Decr. de Purgat.*).

"But who," said Bishop Dupanloup, "troubles nowadays about the bishops' approval?" He had just then before him a book called, *Prophetic Communications from a Soul in Purgatory,* printed without any official sanction. On the ground of revelations made to a supposititious high-favored person, the author describes in most minute detail all that goes on in purgatory, and even mentions the festivals and days of respite granted occasionally to the souls suffering there. There are many such books in circulation so crude and silly as to excite ridicule rather than any feeling of edification. Those who take offence at them do so without rejecting the doctrine of the Church, for she can tell us very little about the state of souls in course of purification.

There are those, however, who seem to think that her silence justifies them in giving the fullest scope to their imagination

on the subject of the other life. Their works, compiled with no regard to philosophical or theological methods, attract an over-curious and credulous public by professing to throw light on what is mysterious. Much harm is done to Christianity by these fictitious accounts, in support of which nothing is found in Holy Scripture or in tradition. Their chief effect is to cast discredit upon the Church in the eyes of unbelievers and of those weak in the faith.

Private revelations, investigated and approved by competent authorities, should be respected, in so far as they agree with sound theology, but it is contrary to reason and the wise provisions of the Church to anticipate her decisions, and hastily to regard every unusual occurrence and every alleged supernatural phenomenon as belonging to the sphere of higher mysticism. It is most unreasonable to believe every story about purgatory merely because it is gruesome — on this subject much reserve is necessary, and care should be taken to avoid all reckless speculation.

With regard to apparitions and hallucinations, we may say that most people who see ghosts are caused by a superstitious belief to see them, and that the "release" requested by the ghost is in most cases effected most radically by freeing the seer from his mania. His conviction of the reality of the apparition is quite insignificant, because a genuine hallucination has the same power to convince the consciousness as an external sense impression; of the cause of the stimulus which produces the phantom in the central sensory area and makes it pass the boundary line between the realm of thought and that of the senses, such a person is unconscious. Unconsciously therefore the mind transforms a subjective into an objective process, and an interior image into an exterior apparition. We admit this central stimulus into our consciousness under the form of a sense impression, of something seen or heard, and we ascribe to it an objective reality corresponding to the impression received. Hallucination may occur when mind and body are both quite healthy, and may be caused by the mere thought. Sir Walter Scott says that, whilst thinking of his friend Byron, he thought he saw his face on the bed curtains. Goethe tells us that his ardent longing for one whom he loved made her appear to him. Intense emotion, deep sorrow for the death of a friend,

and passionate craving for his company, suffice to set the central organ in a state of sensation which makes things appear objective, so that persons with a tendency to hallucinations can produce apparitions of ghosts by an intense thought or a violent emotion.

It is not advisable to ascribe a supernatural character or even any particular significance to all of the visions recorded in the lives of holy persons. We must not overlook the fact that people who devote themselves to contemplation and practise austere penance are peculiarly liable to hallucinations, so that the creations of their imagination are apt to be regarded by them as external phenomena, and imaginary sounds as real voices.

Many stories of supernatural occurrences that have come down to us from remote ages will not bear impartial examination, and the occurrences would not be considered supernatural if they took place at the present time. Their venerable antiquity and their connection with persons to whom we owe deep respect, on account of their holy lives, need not prevent us from inquiring into their authenticity or their origin with the means placed at our disposal by modern science; it seems unreasonable, if not actually dangerous, to make any use of them in matters of dogma.

Neither theology nor religious edification would suffer any loss if we got rid of all the alleged revelations in which the devil is seen to torture the souls in purgatory, such as those recounted in the lives of St. Frances of Rome, St. Bridget, Sister Mechtildis of Magdeburg, and the Venerable Catherine Emmerich. Dionysius the Carthusian (*De Noviss.* iii. *c.* 1, 3 *sq.*) records a vision seen by an English religious, of souls being sawn, torn, and gnawed to pieces by devils. Such a story is absolutely revolting, for the souls in purgatory are so firmly established in the grace and love of God as to be incapable of sin and sure of eternal salvation; hence they cannot be in the company, far less in the power, of the wicked spirits, who are God's enemies for all time, and who have lost for ever all possibility of conversion and all hope of release.

On the other hand it seems very reasonable to suppose that during their time of suffering the souls in purgatory may be visited and consoled by their friends the angels, and especially

by their guardian angels, who will eventually summon them to enter heaven. Several mystics and visionaries have denied that the suffering souls know that they are sure of salvation, and represent them as temporarily in despair. This view is in harmony with some of Luther's utterances that were condemned by the Pope (Bull, *Exurge Domine,* decr. 38) and by the Faculty of Paris. Thalhofer has inferred, from the inclusion of the 7th Psalm in the Office for the Dead, that the souls "are sometimes tortured by anxiety, lest after all they should not be eternally saved" (*Erklärung der Psalmen,* 1889, p. 82). We must, however, bear in mind that the whole liturgy for the dead possesses a dramatic character, and gives special prominence to the moment of death and judgment. For those who are on the point of appearing before the judgment seat of God, prayers for protection against the assaults of the evil one, and for preservation from everlasting punishment are very much in place. At the judgment the irrevocable sentence is pronounced, and the soul perceives its moral condition so clearly that it cannot question the justice of its lot. Souls temporarily excluded from the joys of heaven, that they may be purified, know that they are saved, and free from all sin endangering their salvation, because they are permanently united to God in charity. They cannot be deprived of this consoling knowledge, and therefore in purgatory they are certain that their separation from God is only for a time. The Church Suffering is not made up of souls stricken with blindness, or so bereft of reason as not to know where they are. The place of purification may be called a prison, but it is not a lunatic asylum. Dante apostrophizes the souls in purgatory thus:

> O happy souls, secure
> Whene'er it come, of state of peaceful rest,
> *Purgat.* XXVI, 53.

Because it is easier to say what the holy souls do not suffer, than to describe their sufferings, we may here follow the advice of St. Francis of Sales, who found the thought of purgatory consoling rather than alarming, and who regretted that people spoke and wrote only of the pains, and never of the joys, experienced there.

Those who refuse to admit any ray of light to the place of

purification fail to understand the perfect love of and submission to God, which fills the holy souls. "God's good pleasure," says St. Francis of Sales (*The Love of God,* Bk. ix. c. 4), "is the loving soul's highest aim. She is guided by the divine will as by a very charming cord, and follows it everywhere. She would prefer hell with God's will to Paradise without it. Yes, she would prefer hell to Paradise, if she knew that in the former there were a trifle more of God's good pleasure than in the latter; so that, if she knew her own condemnation (which is naturally impossible) to be somewhat more pleasing to God than her salvation, she would renounce her salvation and hasten to be condemned." St. Thomas uses very similar language in his treatise *De Beatitudine,* where he says, "Far rather would the soul renounce eternal happiness, than be in any respect opposed to the divine will; and it would regard it as supreme bliss to accomplish the will of God in all things, even to its own disadvantage."

St. Francis of Sales remarks: "It is true that the sufferings of purgatory are so great that the most intense anguish in this life cannot be compared with them; but at the same time the souls there enjoy an interior peace, with which no earthly happiness is comparable. For the souls there are in perpetual union with God; they are completely subject to His will, or rather their wills are merged in His, so that they desire nothing but what God desires. If paradise were open to them, they would rather plunge into hell than appear before God's face with the stains that they see in themselves. They submit voluntarily and lovingly to purification, because it is God's will. They desire to suffer as much and as long as He wishes. They are quite incapable of committing a single sin; they are not guilty of even the slightest feeling of impatience nor of the least offence. They love God more than themselves, and love Him above all with a truly pure and perfect love. They receive consolation from His holy angels. They are sure of their eternal salvation, and know that their hope cannot be disappointed. Amidst an ocean of bitterness they dwell in profound peace.

"If then, by reason of its sufferings, purgatory is a kind of hell, it is also a paradise by reason of the joy which love infuses into the hearts of those detained there; this love is stronger than death and mightier than hell. Therefore we

should desire, rather than dread, purgatory, because the flames there are flames of ardent love. Nevertheless, it may well be dreaded, for it is indeed terrible, and the souls there lack their consummation, which consists in the sight and love of God, and in possessing and praising Him for all eternity in this contemplation and love" (Camus, *Esprit de St. F. de Sales*).

This holy bishop derived his ideas on purgatory from a treatise written on the subject by St. Catherine of Genoa. His most intimate friend and disciple, Bishop J. P. Camus of Belley, tells us that he recommended this treatise to others, and praised it very much. "I too," says Camus, "have read it again and again most attentively, according to his advice, and each time I received fresh light from above and experienced fresh joy within me. I acknowledge that nowhere did I discover anything on this subject that so completely satisfied me. I have also invited non-Catholics to read it, and they have done so to their great consolation. A very learned convert expressed the following opinion regarding it: 'If this little book had fallen into my hands before my abjuration, I should have been more affected by it and better instructed on the subject of my errors than by all the learned apologetic and controversial literature published on this debated point.'"

It is worthy of notice that besides St. Francis of Sales, Louis of Granada, and others, the great Protestant philosopher and theologian Leibniz concurs in St. Catherine's statements (Leibniz, *System der Theol.*). Joseph von Görres, the well-known mystic, calls St. Catherine "an angel on earth," "a soul who during her lifetime underwent the purification that she described so vividly in her work on purgatory," (*Einleitung zu Heinrich Suso's "Leben"*).

A few passages from this wonderful little book may be quoted *verbatim,* but the reader should remember that the saint's eyes could not actually penetrate the mysteries of purgatory, and that she often had great difficulty in finding language in which to make her thoughts and feelings intelligible to men of ordinary intellect; and, in order to harmonize the mysteries of God's justice and mercy, she is apt to make statements that seem to contradict each other. Such obscurities and apparent contradictions may be explained thus:—Every ray of light from the sun of eternal truth that strikes the soul is broken up by a

double prism before it again reaches the exterior, the prism, viz., of subjective thought and inadequate speech. The soul, as long as it is confined within the body, beholds spirits only in sensible form, and depicts purely spiritual conditions by means of metaphors from the material world. The visions that it sees in rapture are made of shadow rather than light, and can never be faithfully described in words. Hence they are often obscure and hard to interpret, and yet sometimes they afford welcome and valuable assistance to our limited knowledge, and we need not hesitate to avail ourselves of their help, if they place in a fresh light the harmony between rational thought and revealed truth, and bring this to bear upon the conditions and circumstances of the other life. St. Catherine's statements regarding purgatory appeal to us chiefly because they follow from the fundamental truths of the natural and supernatural order, and contain many lofty and edifying thoughts on the subject of the relation existing between God and the holy souls in purgatory. St. Catherine says (Eng. trans. *C. T. S. of Ireland,* 1909, chap. 2): "Apart from the happiness of the saints in heaven, I think there is no joy comparable to that of the souls in purgatory. An incessant communication with God renders their happiness daily more intense, and this union with God grows more and more intimate, according as the impediments to that union, which exist in the soul, are consumed. These obstacles are the rust and remains, as it were, of sin; and the fire continues to consume them, and thus the soul gradually expands under the divine influence. . . . An object which is covered cannot be influenced by the beams of the sun, not owing to any defect on the part of the sun, which continues to shine, but owing to the hindrance opposed by the covering. When the veil is burnt away the object is exposed to the sun, and the more the covering is consumed, the greater will be the action of the sun on the object exposed. Now the rust of sin is the covering of the soul, and the fire of purgatory continues to consume it, and the more it is consumed, the less will it intercept the rays of the true sun, which is God Himself. Thus according as the rust diminishes, and the soul is laid bare to the divine beams, the bliss is augmented. Hence the one grows and the other wanes, until the time of trial has elapsed. But the pain is not lessened, it is only the time of suffering

which decreases. And with regard to the will of these souls, they can never say that these pains are pains, so great is their contentment with the ordination of God, with which their will is united in perfect charity (chap. 2).

"With regard to Purgatory, — when the soul is separated from the body, and does not find itself in that state of stainlessness in which it was created, it perceives an obstacle, which cannot be withdrawn unless by means of purgatory, and straightway casts itself thither, willingly. And if there were no such means appointed to remove the hindrance, that very instant the soul would engender within itself a hell still worse than purgatory, on beholding that inpediment to union with God, its last end. And this hindrance is of such a painful nature (inasmuch as it severs the soul from God, its final beatitude) that, compared to it, purgatory, though, as was said, it be like hell, would count as naught (chap. 7).

"There are no gates to Paradise. All the doors are open, and, as far as God is concerned, those who wish to enter, enter there, for God is all mercy, and stands before us with open arms extended towards us, to receive us into His glory. But I see well likewise that the divine essence is of such great and unimaginable purity that the soul, which has the very slightest atom of imperfection, would rather fling itself headlong into a thousand hells than present itself, with that stain upon it, before the divine Majesty. And that is why the soul, seeing that purgatory has been appointed by God to cleanse it from all stains, casts itself into it, and accounts it a great mercy to be thus able to remove them. No tongue can tell, nor mind conceive, what purgatory really imports. Nevertheless . . . the soul, which perceives the very least blemish, accepts the pain as a mercy, and counts the suffering as nothing, when compared to that bar which sunders it from its love. And it seems to me that the greatest pain endured by the souls in purgatory arises from their seeing in themselves something displeasing to God, and committed willingly against such goodness as His. And the reason is this: — Being in a state of grace, these souls know the truth, and realize the grievousness of the hindrance which impedes their approach to God" (chap. 8).

St. Catherine expresses her regret at being unable to find any metaphor or instance, and at having no words capable, of ex-

plaining what she knows and perceives in her mind. Like other saints of the same kind, she realizes the impossibility of reflecting the rays of heavenly light that had fallen on her soul.

"Suppose," she says, "that in the whole world there was but one loaf of bread, and that that one loaf was intended to appease the hunger of the entire human race, not by eating or tasting it, but only by looking at it. Now if any one who had that natural need of eating, which is common to all of us, in the normal state of health, was deprived of that food, without at the same time being able to die or grow ill, is it not clear that his hunger would grow daily greater? And suppose moreover that the person knows that that bread alone can stay the craving of the hunger gnawing him . . . is it not evident that the nearer he approached that bread, . . . the more the natural craving would be excited. . . . The souls in purgatory hope to see this bread and to be satiated with it. Accordingly they suffer so much hunger, and endure so much pain, as long as they are prevented from the enjoyment of that living bread, which is no other than Jesus Christ, true God, our Saviour and our Love" (chap. 6).

As a falling body approaches the earth its velocity increases. Now the souls in purgatory are inflamed with both natural and supernatural longing for God, and are impelled violently to seek union with Him, so that delay, though they themselves are the fault of it, inflicts on them such agony that they would die if they were capable of death. They are free from all the guilt of sin, and their will is most closely united with God's will. They feel how their loving Father is incessantly and irresistibly drawing them to Himself, but they cannot go to Him, because they are still stained with sin. If it were His will, they would plunge into a far hotter fire in order to be cleansed more speedily. They extol His justice, which demands payment even of the last farthing; and they praise His mercy, for He has made it possible for them to be cleansed from sin after death. They lament, but they do not complain. They ask for the help of their surviving friends, but are contented with the least solace afforded them by vicarious satisfaction on the part of others. They are not vexed when some of their number are released before them, and would rather suffer for ever than remain in debt to God's justice. Dante heard songs of exulta-

tion proceeding from purgatory whenever a soul passed thence to heaven.

The knowledge of God, possessed by the holy souls, increases hour by hour, and they esteem every item of it as of greater importance than their agony. The more brightly eternal light shines upon them, the more intense becomes their unsatisfied love; the greater their joy, the greater also is their suffering; and, as the end approaches, the more impatiently do they long for it. And, on the other hand, the more intense their anguish, the greater is their consolation. Perfect peace amidst ardent longing, abundant consolation in most grievous sorrow, patient endurance of inconceivable torture, joyful submission to temporary condemnation, a marvellous admixture of happiness and misery, a kind of heaven in a species of hell — these are the mysteries of purgatory, where souls are purged again and again, like gold in the furnace, until they are free from every particle of dross.

"And when the soul finds itself on the returning path, it is so inflamed with the desire of being transformed in God, that this very longing is its purgatory" (chap. xi.). It seems, then, that St. Catherine and many others regard this torturing fire of love and longing as the essence of purgatory.

St. Teresa says (*Interior Castle,* VI, 11), that the love of God can be so intense as to act on the soul like a wound from a fiery dart. Hence she infers that the souls in purgatory, though not in the flesh, suffer far more keenly than those still in the body. Even as the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so doth the soul long for God, crying, "Woe is me, that my sojourning is prolonged" (Ps. cxix. 5). "Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will fly away and be at rest?" (Ps. liv. 7). "My soul is as earth without water unto Thee; Hear me speedily, O Lord" (Ps. cxlii. 6). "I shall be satisfied when Thy glory shall appear" (Ps. xvi. 15). "My soul hath thirsted after the strong living God. When shall I come and appear before the face of God? My tears have been my bread day and night, whilst it is said to me daily: Where is thy God? These things I remembered and poured out my soul in me, for I shall go over into the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, the noise of feasting. Why art thou sad, O my soul? and why dost thou

trouble me? Hope in God, for I will still give praise to Him; the salvation of my countenance, and my God" (Ps. xli. 2–6). In meekness and the humility of heart the soul finds its rest. Until their purgation is complete God strikes His favorites with the rod of His anger and turns away His face from them, but He has not rejected them; He chastises them in love for the purpose of their sanctification, and will soon take them to Himself for ever. "He will wipe away all tears from their eyes, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away" (Apoc. xxi. 4).

The beloved spouses of Christ, the chosen vessels of the Holy Ghost, suffer in purgatory more than the martyrs ever suffered on earth, but they suffer with still greater joy and patience. In the case of the martyrs, their love of their crucified Lord and their passionate desire to be like Him in His sufferings and with Him in His glory did not deaden their pain, and, in the case of the holy souls likewise, their absolute peace and submission to God's will do not prevent them from feeling agonies of pain at being separated from Him. Though in one sense they are full of joy, they are nevertheless so unhappy as to need and deserve our help and sympathy. They cannot help themselves, and to refuse them our aid would be most cruel, and in many instances would testify, not only to our indifference, but also to our black ingratitude and injustice.

However painful the purging after death may be, the doctrine of purgatory is most consoling. Only misunderstanding or wilful misinterpretation of it can render it terrible, and the Church is not answerable for additions due to man's ingenuity or imagination. This doctrine is a source of encouragement to the just, who, being aware of their many faults and frailties, might otherwise give way to fear and despondency. Even though at death they see stains on their wedding garment, they have no cause for alarm lest they should be for ever excluded from heaven. They will have to wait in the antechamber until their purification is finished, and then they will be admitted. If there were no purgatory how great on the other hand would be the terror of those who have spent their time on earth in ease and worldly amusements, not in the practice of virtue, and who, though converted at their last hour, have no opportunity for doing penance! They have sinned much, and failed to make

any reparation, and now, when they would fain atone for their evil deeds, it is too late. But they know that in the next world they will be able to undertake and complete their reparation and with this knowledge they die in peace. When the hour of death comes suddenly to a sinner, and he is abruptly confronted with eternity, the burden of his sins would make him despair, unless he could look forward to purgatory. As it is, a ray of hope is shed upon his anxious heart, and he feels ready to do penance even to the Last Day, if only he may be saved, and in these dispositions he commends his poor soul to God's mercy. None but perfectly pure souls can enter the holy City of God, but before its gates is a vestibule of purification for the sake of all sinners who die contrite.

This truth increases and strengthens our hope of a joyful reunion in the other world. A meeting of friends in purgatory is at once a delight and a sorrow. They are sharing indescribable pain, for they are not in the glory of eternal light, but tormented by the cleansing flames; they are not in God's presence, but banished from it for a time; they are not in the peace that comes from possession and happiness, but in the unrest of aching hope and suspense. Still they meet in rejoicing, because they look forward with confidence to each other's release, and they congratulate one another on having overcome all temptations and conflicts, so that, being victorious in the last combat, they are now for ever safe. They vie with one another in extolling God's mercy, which has done so much for them, His justice, which is still accomplishing a great work in them, and His love, which heals through chastisement, sanctifies through pain, and releases through suffering. Their songs are full of praise, of thanksgiving, hope, confidence, peace, and love.

> Voices I heard, and each most piteously
> Appealed for mercy and for peace to pray
> The Lamb of God, who all our sins puts by.
> Still *Agnus Dei* led them on their way,
> One word for all, for all one melody
> So that their song full concord did display.
>
> DANTE, *Purgatory*, XVI, 16, trans. Longfellow.

Our wish should be not to meet in purgatory any of those whom we loved on earth, and that they may all have preceded us to the heavenly abode of joy and peace.

Let us, whilst here below, remember our dear departed with

active love, and look forward to meeting them again in heaven. Let us console those who perhaps still need our consolation, and help those who cannot help themselves. The one who shows his love only by noisy lamentations and unprofitable tears will feel ashamed on the day of reunion. A Christian ought not to cling to the mortal remains, but rather aim at a higher relation with the departed and attune his soul to nobler harmonies. The bond of love, that death is unable to break, is most surely safeguarded for the future if we maintain it continually by our loving efforts to aid those who have been taken from us.

We owe unspeakable gratitude to God for allowing us to do more for our dear ones than merely mourn over their graves, bestrewing them with flowers that will soon wither. It is a consolation to us that we still can to some extent make a return to those who conferred innumerable benefits upon us, but who passed away before we had any opportunity of paying our debt to them. It is greatly to our own advantage to make zealous use of the means that God has given us for the good of the souls in purgatory. He will reward us abundantly. In His justice and wisdom He has in some degree placed restraints upon Himself, but He has placed it within our power to help the holy souls by making satisfaction *for* them. By helping them we obtain for ourselves a right to the special protection of God, and of the angels and saints, who rejoice whenever they can welcome a newcomer to their midst. Most of all, however, do we gain friends among the holy souls themselves, and when they reach heaven, they will surely remember and help us.

With reference to indulgences applicable to the dead, we often meet with the mistaken idea that they are granted in the same way as to the living. The Church applies indulgences to the holy souls, not by an act of jurisdiction and acquittal, but by an act of intercession and sacrifice, i.e., she does not remit their penalty, nor release them from it, but offers a satisfaction from the merits of Christ and the saints, that corresponds to the indulgence in question, adding the request that the sufferings of the holy souls may be diminished and alleviated.

Let us notice, too, that even before their release they can help us. In the first centuries of Christianity, as we learn from inscriptions, there were not only prayers offered for the dead, but also petitions were addressed to them. St. Catherine of Bo-

logna was in the habit of invoking them and stated that she owed much to their intercession.

St. Thomas is, it is true, of another opinion. Many theologians, especially in recent years, have tried to show that he admits as possible the intercession of souls in purgatory for survivors. Reference is made to one passage where he speaks of them as sympathizing with their friends on earth, even though they do not know their state, just as we pray for the departed, without knowing in what condition they are. It should be noted that St. Thomas is here speaking of the dead in general, not excluding the lost, and is commenting in fact upon the words of Dives in the parable. In the passage in question he says explicitly that the souls in purgatory are not in a state to pray for others, but rather need prayers themselves. It seems a mistake to interpret this passage thus: — These souls are not, like the saints in heaven, in a state which renders them peculiarly able to intercede for others; they are not so absolutely superior to us as to be real helpers or mediators, interceding for us, but not requiring our prayers. That this interpretation fails to convey the correct meaning appears from the context. St. Thomas is attempting to meet the following objection: — the souls in purgatory do not pray for us, and that consequently the saints in heaven do not pray for us. Instead of denying the antecedent, he questions the accuracy of the conclusion, because the conditions in purgatory and in heaven are not the same, and so he says: The suffering souls, in so far as they are incapable of sin, are our superiors, but as prisoners they are our inferiors, and so are not in a position to intercede for us.

The great majority of later theologians, including Suarez and Bellarmine, have abandoned St. Thomas's opinion, for very good reasons. The souls in purgatory, in spite of being liable to punishment, are, like the saints in heaven, God's friends and favorites, and many of them are richer in merits and more pleasing to Him than some of the saints. They are full of charity, eager to help their neighbors, and anxious for the welfare of those whom they have left behind. Why, then, should they not intercede for us and be heard by God? The Provincial Council of Vienna in 1858 declared plainly that they can help us by their prayers.

Numerous theologians have drawn from this the conclusion

that it is not only permissible, but even advisable, to invoke the holy souls. Others, however, argue that they have no knowledge of our individual circumstances and prayers, whereas the saints, who enjoy the Beatific Vision, share in God's knowledge. We may maintain with St. Augustine, Suarez, and others, that, either by God's direct revelation, or indirectly through their guardian angels, the souls in purgatory may receive information regarding the prayers which we offer for them, as also the favors which we ask of them. No one can deny that this is at least possible. On the other hand, it is said that the holy souls are cut off from intercourse with the outer world as a punishment, and therefore can only receive special revelations from God and the angels, such revelations not being usual favors. We cannot absolutely reject these and similar considerations, but they do not touch the question whether it may not be possible for the soul, set free from the body, to obtain by its own powers information regarding earthly events and circumstances.

The Church does not forbid *private* invocation of the souls in purgatory, and in recent years this has become a very popular devotion in many places. But as the souls are themselves still in need of prayers, we can only ask their intercession in the same way as we ask living persons to pray for us, and so this cannot become a public form of prayer, and must not find any place in formularies of devotion intended for public use. The idea that all active sympathy and interest cease as soon as the body is laid in the grave, and that no interchange of love and friendship can exist between the living and the dead, is in Cardinal Wiseman's words, a belief "cold and gloomy as a vault."

The truths that we have discussed supply us with potent and yet sweet remedies for the pain of parting. None can escape this pain, and therefore we may prolong our discussion a little further by considering those bereavements which cause particular grief, and the consoling thoughts most suitable to each. We shall follow the Fathers of the Church, quoting where it is possible their very words. These are the thoughts not merely of pious souls but of men of the highest intellect, and are a weighty testimony to the truth. Such thoughts are full of consolation, and as long as there are sorrowful hearts that the visible world cannot satisfy, there is no reason to fear that the comfort offered by the Fathers of the Church will be forgotten.

CHAPTER XVI

THROUGH SEPARATION TO ETERNAL UNION

I. Wedlock in Heaven

NO union on earth is so close as that formed by Christian marriage, which was sanctified by Christ and raised by Him to the dignity of a Sacrament, an intimate union of the lives of husband and wife, and a union not to be severed except by death. "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be in one flesh" (Matth. xix. 5). When death with merciless hand severs this bond between two persons who have shared all the joys and sorrows of earthly life, how heartbreaking is the parting! The happier the union, the more grievous the separation! And greatly more serious is the loss if there are little children left without a father's or a mother's care.

To demand that the surviving partner give up all hope of meeting again the beloved departed would be to cruelly aggravate the affliction, to demand a sacrifice that is to true affection the hardest and most unendurable of all. Though the outward and visible union ceases at death, the inward and spiritual union continues. The mourner's heart is drawn irresistibly towards the departed, and the husband believes in the unseen presence of her whose vows of undying faithfulness could not be broken even by death. We hope that the dead, whom we can never forget, are with God in heaven; but God is everywhere, and, therefore, the bliss of heaven is also everywhere. God makes His faithful followers happy, and suffers them to gaze into the abyss of His being, and to drink of the source of His bliss. A joyful eternity follows this short life of pain and sorrow. The light of faith prevents the bereaved, weighed down by grief, from plunging into the darkness of despair. Happy are those who even amidst the gravest misfortunes remain susceptible for

the consolations offered by the Christian faith. A little while and those whose farewell was so heartrending will be reunited; meanwhile the partner left behind must bear the double burden, and though it is hard for him or her to care for the children without the other's aid, new strength from on high will come forth in generous measure.

At any moment the bond between man and wife may be severed, and that this should cause a deep wound is inevitable; yet even for this wound a remedy is provided. Two hearts, now united, would fain remain so for ever. If you fear lest death should burst asunder the bonds of union, your fear is that of night; in the light of day death is seen to remove the barrier which now keeps the two loving hearts apart.

To a young wife who had lost her good and distinguished husband, after five years of happy married life, St. John Chrysostom addressed a very touching letter to console her. After speaking of the honorable estate of widowhood and the merits of Therasius, her husband, he continues: "But with lamentations thou recallest that kind face, that gentle look, that soothing voice, and thine eyes demand the restoration of the cause of thy joy. Thou art inconsolable, because with him thou hast lost thy glory, ornament and support, and this thought shrouds thy mind in gloom and fills thy heart with sorrow. But, my dear child, why dost thou imagine that the light of thy love is extinguished? Cling fast to it; for so great is the force of Christian love, that it embraces and unites not only relatives, neighbors, and all whom we now see, but also those who are far away; neither distance, nor time, nor brute force have power to sever the bond of love. If thou longest to behold him, to hear his voice and to speak with him, I will tell thee what to do. Keep thy nuptial chamber solitary, safe and pure for thy Therasius; let the first love, that united thee to him, go down with thee untarnished into the grave; let thy life be a mirror of his life, thy actions the continuation of his virtues, and then rest assured that thou wilt find him again in the company of the blessed, and pass with him not ten, not a hundred, not a thousand, not a hundred thousand years, but all eternity. Thou wilt meet thy Therasius, not in that manly beauty, in which thou knewest him in this world, but in such brilliancy and splendor, that he will shine a hundred times more brightly than the sun.

"Now I ask thee this question: — supposing some one had promised to make thy husband ruler of the whole world, on condition that thou shouldst be separated from him for twenty years, after which time thou shouldst welcome him back, wearing the imperial diadem, and adorned with a sceptre and purple robes, and shouldst sit with him on the same throne; — wouldst thou not gladly have consented to this separation, and remained loyal to thy husband during those years? Therefore endure his absence with patience; not for love of an unavailing earthly kingdom, but for desire of an eternal heavenly home; not in order to have thy husband restored in the perishable mantle of a mortal king, but clad in the heavenly robes of a glorious immortality.

"Even though the time now seem long, be not dismayed; he may appear to thee in thy dreams, delight thee with his presence, and comfort thee with loving words. Remember the lofty dignity that thy Therasius enjoys in heaven, and restrain thy tears and sighs. Live as he lived, and strive for even greater perfection. Practise the virtues that he practised, and thou wilt be welcomed in the same abode where he now sits in glory, and wilt be united with him in the everlasting tabernacles" (Chrysost. *Ad viduam iuniorem, tract.* 1).

In a letter of consolation addressed to Theodora, the holy widow of a noble Spaniard named Lucinius, St. Jerome says: "He is enthroned as victor above, and beholds thee, and comforts thee in thy sorrow. He prepares for thee a place at his side; he is filled with that pure love that impelled you both, even in this world, to live as brother and sister. So again it will be some day hereafter, when the mortal body has put on immortality" (*Epist.* 75, *ad Theodoram*).

The holy abbot Theodore of Studium addressed a bereaved friend in very similar language: "There we shall be as the angels; no sooner have we laid aside this burden of decay and death, when we shall enter upon a perpetual and immortal life. If then the dear one you love has left us, she has passed from darkness to light, and from a life liable to disease and death to a blessed immortality; there you will see her again and partake in her everlasting happiness. For the rest take courage, think of the children, of the household, and above all of your own soul. Enrich it with virtues, as did your wife, that chosen

soul, who has gone before us, leaving us a glorious example of a holy life" (Theod. Studit., *Epist.* 144, c. 2).

To a certain Italica St. Augustine writes: "Look not upon thy state as hopeless; we have the faithful promise that we shall pass from this life to the next, where those who preceded us on our pilgrimage, and were not lost, will become the dearer to us the better we shall know them; and this love is free from all fear of separation. Thy husband, whose death has made thee a widow, no one knew so well as thou didst, but he knew himself still better. Thou couldst behold his face, but not his heart, for the interior of man is seen only by the spirit that dwells within. But when our Lord comes to reveal all that is hidden, and to make known even the innermost thoughts of the heart, there will be no secrets in, or for, any one. How clear and penetrating must that light be, which pierces and illumines all the hidden places of our hearts! No tongue can describe it, no mind can comprehend it, for God Himself is this light" (August., *Epist.* 92. *Opp.* I, c. *tom.* II, 172).

In the other life husband and wife will see clearly how their temporary separation was designed for their good; and they will vie with one another in thanking God for having called one away to heaven that the other might labor more zealously for Him on earth. Being set free from all compulsion, their affection, that was sanctified by the sacrament, returns to the state of liberty in which it originated; but it is now far purer and better than before, and there is no more risk of its being sullied by any taint of selfishness or sensuality.

What God has united death cannot for ever separate. It is true that our Lord said to the Sadducees, "In the resurrection they shall neither marry, nor be married, but shall be as the angels of God in heaven" (Matth. xxii. 30); but, as Tertullian remarks, "God will in eternity no more separate those whom He has united, than He sanctions their separation in this life. A wife will belong to her husband, and he will possess her love, which is the chief thing in marriage (*De monogamia,* c. 10).

It is obvious that after the resurrection this love will not be a purely spiritual activity, as it must be in the intermediate state before soul and body are united. For after their reunion, the soul will inspire the body, and take possession of it, so that thenceforth they will again form one whole, and act conjointly.

Hand in hand with Knowledge goes Love, the most perfect expression of all effort, and both are the peculiar and essential manifestation of human nature, its life and its strength. The glorified body, on account of the spiritualization that it has undergone, is better able to participate in the soul's higher activities, particularly in its joy at recovering its loved ones, never to lose them again. It is impossible, therefore, for the blessed not to feel love, a love in which the dispositions will harmonize and experience the most intense pleasure.

But this love of possession and enjoyment, although not devoid of feeling, is free from inordinate passion; it is ardent and tender, but too pure and holy to resemble any form of earthly love, unless, indeed, the ideal love of a betrothed couple before marriage may be regarded as its foreshadowing.

Love, as it is known to the world, soon grows cold, and, unless supported by true friendship, a Christian sense of duty and especial grace, it cannot uphold the bond of union, and in spite of all sorrows and sacrifices stand firm until death.

The human heart is an abyss of unexplored mysteries; it is a little world full of incidents that none can foresee; love and hatred, affection and aversion occupy it in turns; it is fickle and restless as the rolling waves, thrown hither and thither by impressions; always fond of the present, yet never content with it; always looking hopefully forward to the future, much preoccupied with the thought of making its happiness secure, but quite oblivious of its own waywardness. At one moment it is full of pure and noble emotions, the very next it is assailed by a storm of passion, and engaged in a deadly struggle to avoid utter overthrow.

Time and familiarity tend gradually to extinguish the love that is based exclusively on the senses. Earthly advantages appear most attractive from a distance, but lose their lustre when close at hand; seen from afar the light conquers the shadow; close by the shadow obscures the light. An eye blinded by innocent love is easily deceived, and the happiness of many a marriage is wrecked when the unsuspected faults and defects of the partners are revealed to each other. A temporal possession ceases to charm us as soon as we have acquired it, and the same thing happens in marriage; desire and fervent admiration give place to coolness and indifference or estrangement. The

greater the happiness is imagined to be and the more remote the prospect of attaining it, so much the more eagerly is it sought, and so much the more bitter is the disappointment resulting from the difference between dream and reality.

Years pass quickly, and carry away with them the charms of youth, until a moment arrives when the lover doubts his own power to inspire love. He desires to retain what has hopelessly passed away, and, instead of acquiescing in the course of nature, he attempts to defy her, and violently to reawaken a passion that inevitably began to die down as soon as it had achieved its object.

To this vain attempt to make a fire burn without fuel is joined the neglect to recognize the fickleness of one's own heart. A lover awakens some day from his dream, and is astonished that he can no longer love what he adored so recently. He cannot discover why this is so, and does not perceive at first that nothing has changed but his own heart, although, when he realizes this fact, he receives a shock, from which he probably never quite recovers. It is no alleviation, but rather an aggravation of the pain, if he persuades himself that his partner's heart has cooled in the same degree and even more quickly. It is only the soul which practises virtue, and therefore sees and loves virtue in others, that is proof against these trials.

Perfect joy is afforded by that love only which preserves undiminished its first ardor, and bears in itself the full certainty of permanence. But where in this world can such love be found if even the love, sealed by the Church in God's presence, is liable to fickleness and disloyalty? No earthly love is perfect, and the knowledge that the human affections are prone to change often causes anxiety and distrust, especially in persons of the noblest character, and it poisons their happiness.

Though outwardly the loving hearts are separated by death, inwardly they are more firmly united; and in that better world, where peace and joy prevail, married love returns to its pristine state of tenderness, innocence, and depth. All the thoughts and anticipations of loving spouses will be fulfilled for all eternity, in a manner far surpassing expectation, independently of sex contrasts and relations, and of their mutual need of one another, such as exists now, when "the husband is his wife's mind, and the wife is her husband's soul."

There are painful surprises in earthly married life, but when in the light of glory the idol that once lived in the imagination becomes a fully realized ideal, free from all imperfections and radiant in beauty and dignity, it, too, will be a surprise, but a very different kind. The glad surprise felt at the first recognition is not followed by any disappointment; the love of a reunited couple never dies away; this love arises from a clear knowledge and true appreciation of the merits of one another; it is controlled by reason, and cannot be disturbed, shaken, or weakened by any subsequent misunderstanding or deception. The joy will last for ever, and the love will be eternal.

Happy the widow and widower who do not have to look forward with dread to the reunion with the former partner, no matter whether they have remained in widowed state or, after conscientious self-examination and deliberation, have again entered the state of matrimony for urgent domestic or moral reasons, so as to give the adversary no occasion to speak evil (1 Tim. v. 14).

Inquisitive and jealous persons like to ponder the question that the Sadducees once asked our Lord. A certain wife once wrote to her husband as follows: "What would you think if you found me above as having become the wife of another after your death? Alas, heaven would not be a heaven for me, if I found you there and you had after my death become another woman's husband." This is a sentimental complaint that is ignorant of the angelic purity of conjugal love in heaven. On earth conjugal love cannot bear participation of another party in the loved one's affection, but a second and justified marriage on the part of the survivor will not in the hereafter destroy the first love. All the blessed who have been bound by mutual ties on earth will belong to each other in a special manner, and the man, if there be such, who has had seven wives will love each individually, as if she had been his only wife, and will possess them all collectively in an inseparable spiritual union. Although all may be equally closely connected with him by the bond of marriage, they may occupy very various positions according to their rank in glory, and the particular wife who will deserve and enjoy his love most perfectly will be the one adorned with the greatest degree of holiness. With confidence and ardent desire have holy widows in every age looked forward to

reunion with their husbands. This was the case with Judith, Monica, Marcella, Paula, Frances of Rome, Jane Frances de Chantal, Elizabeth, and many others.

II. The Death of the Young

Death often comes early, breaking off the buds before they can develop into blossoms. Mothers know well what it is to lose a child on whom they had set their affections, and in whom they found their happiness. They welcomed his entrance into the world with tears of joy and thankfulness, too soon to be changed into those of sorrow at his untimely death. With him are laid in the grave countless dearly treasured dreams and hopes. There is much reason to weep in such a case, for all the bitterness of death and separation is there felt most keenly. When an old man dies, after completing his life-work, we acquiesce in the orderly action of the natural law; it must needs be that the autumn blasts should strip the leaves off a tree that has borne its flowers and fruit. But when the frost destroys the blossoms in the spring, or the hail beats down the seedlings, and a young life is cut short by death, there is an interruption in the ordinary course of nature, and the Lord of life and death appears to be acting inconsistently, for He destroys His own work that is just begun. A child passes away, taking with him all his parents' joy in life, and leaving a gap that will never be altogether filled.

To lose even a young child is most painful, but the loss of a son or daughter who have reached adolescence is far worse, especially if they have possessed noble qualities of mind or heart, and promised to be the support and comfort of their parents in old age. Yes, it is indeed sad when the young die, whether they pass away in infancy, in childhood, or in the flower of youth; but, on the other hand, as old folks say, they are happy in having tasted the joys of life without experiencing its disappointments. Those who live long must confess that they have seen, suffered, and also done much evil. With thoughts such as these the pagan author Plutarch sought to console his friend Apollonius (*Cons. ad Ap.* 35); he reminds him of Menander's saying, "Those whom the gods love best, die young"; and of that of Euripides, "Life is nothing but toil and trouble,"

and he argues that it is well to die in the flower of one's youth, esteemed and loved by all. He compares life to a banquet, pointing out that the guest is happiest who leaves betimes, and does not linger to fall into the besotted satiety of old age. He goes on to quote a passage from Pindar, in which the prospect of a pleasant abode in the next world is offered to the righteous, but concludes with the doubting remark, "If it is true, as we may perhaps believe."

How sad was the lot of pagan parents, tortured by doubt and uncertainty at the very moment when they were wounded to the quick by the loss of their nearest and dearest.

In vain do philosophers speak in eloquent and touching language of the child's escape from the infirmity of age, and the troubles of life. In vain is it suggested that their present loss may relieve the parents from the sorrow that the ingratitude of their children so often causes them in later years; — such reflections are powerless to soothe such deep grief. But the sobs and lamentations are checked by the thought of meeting once more in the world to come, a thought which finds its way straight to the mourner's heart. Even natural love constrains a bereaved father or mother to believe it impossible for the dead child to have departed for ever while for them there can be no forgetfulness; and this natural feeling is not self-deception, but points to an undoubted and positive truth.

In one day Job lost his ten children and all his worldly goods, besides being stricken with disease; but he stood firm against all this fearful storm of misfortune because he hoped for the resurrection, and the reunion with the departed.

The heart of many a Christian mother is ready to break as she is made to witness the death of her child. She cannot think without a shudder of that Jewish mother who gave up her seven sons to an agonizing death. What was it that enabled that mother to overcome the weakness of her sex and the intense sorrow which the martyrdom of her sons caused her, so much so that she could even exhort them to endure to the end the horrible tortures inflicted by the cruel king? Let us learn from her own lips the mystery of the amazing courage that rendered a weak woman and loving mother the greatest heroine of pre-Christian times. Six of her sons had been put to death, and only the youngest was left; King Antiochus offered him his own

friendship if only he would obey him. Then from the son the king turned to the mother, and addressed her in words half threatening and half flattering, imploring her by her motherly love to save her son. So powerful was the appeal that the tyrant, or else the mother's heart, seemed to have prevailed, and she promised to counsel her boy. "So, bending over towards him, she said to him in her own language: 'My son, have pity upon me that bore thee nine months in my womb, and gave thee suck three years, and nourished thee, and brought thee up unto this age. I beseech thee, my son, look upon heaven and earth and all that is in them, and consider that God made them out of nothing, and mankind also. So thou shalt not fear this tormentor, but being made a worthy partner with thy brethren, receive death, that in that mercy I may receive thee again with thy brethren'" (2 Mach. vii. 27–29).

Before sunset on that terrible day the noble mother had rejoined her children, never again to be separated from them — on the last day she will see them in their glorious bodies, wearing the crown of martyrdom, and she herself will shine resplendent in their midst. So will St. Felicitas and St. Symphorosa shine, each in the company of their sons, and so, too, will every mother who has trained her children to keep God's law and so to enter heaven.

Among the many consoling thoughts that sustained the holy Mother of Sorrows at the foot of the Cross, her divine Son's words about the Resurrection, and the promise to be with them once more, were surely the chief ones. The hope we feel beside a death-bed may not be soon fulfilled, but its eventual fulfilment is certain.

To Jairus our Lord said, "The maiden is not dead, but sleepeth." To human eyes she was dead, but to those of God asleep. That which is death according to the course and law of nature is sleep in view of God's power, which will awaken all those that slumber. The child whom you mourn is not dead; before it went to sleep it said "Good-night," and looked forward to seeing you again on that new day, which no night will follow.

St. Paulinus of Nola, who died in 431, exchanged the robes of a senator for an humble monk's habit, and was subsequently raised to the see of Nola. To console Pneumatius and Fidelis, mourning over the death of their little son Celsus, a boy en-

dowed with the highest qualities of mind and heart, St. Paulinus wrote them a letter, containing the following words: "My dear friends, Pneumatius and Fidelis, if you desire to meet your Celsus again, and to rejoice with him for ever in God's bosom, tread the steep and narrow path that leads to heaven, and strive to reproduce in yourselves the life and example of Christ. O sweetest Celsus! thou art now a dweller in heaven, the object of the tears, the joy and glory of those who love thee. Thou, who art our eyes, our heart and our treasure, remember us before God. Brief and fair was thy life in our midst, but thy piety, far beyond thy years, has gained for thee an eternal reward. Live with my innocent son, who lived as many days as thou didst years. Live both of you in bliss with those innocent babes slain by Herod's sword. Exult with them in the presence of the Lamb, and with thy tender hands offer Him palm branches and nosegays. Play in the eternal garden, where the roses have no thorns, and the tulips and lilies never fade. For me and my Teresa (who like her husband had entered religious life) as well as for Pneumatius and Fidelis, since we all are your kinsfolk, obtain from God the favor of being reunited with thee in the heavenly city."

"Our beloved is not under the earth, but in heaven," wrote St. Basil to his friend Nectarius, who had lost his only son. "The hour of separation will not last long. He has reached the goal more quickly, but we all shall reach it, too, and arrive at the same shelter. May we imitate the purity of this angel, and, being free from guilt, enter the haven of rest."

To the Empress Placilla St. Gregory of Nyssa wrote: "Your little girl has left you, but she has gone to our Lord; by closing her eyes to you she opened them to light eternal. She sits no longer at your side, but is with the angels; she has been uprooted from your garden and transplanted to paradise. She has put off the imperial purple and has put on new robes, woven neither of wool nor of silk, but of the rays of imperishable glory. What a grand exchange. You grieve because you no longer see her dear little face, but her true beauty resides in her soul, which is now among the choirs of angels. How lovely is the eye that beholds God! How charming the lips that utter His praises; He delights in hearing babes, and sucklings extol Him. How exquisite are those little hands that never did any wrong, those

feet that never trod the ways of sin, and have left no traces on the path of the ungodly! How fair is her soul, radiant with innocence, simplicity and piety, far surpassing the brilliancy of emeralds and precious stones!" (*In funere Pulcheriae*).

Well off are those little ones who exchange this sinful, sorrowful world for the joys of heaven. "Suffer the little children and forbid them not to come to me; for the kingdom of heaven is for such" (Matth. xix. 14). The knowledge that their darling is safe in heaven, awaiting the joyful day of reunion with them, must bring consolation to all bereaved parents. They may weep over their loss, but not like Rachel who refused to be comforted, for they do not sorrow like those who have no hope.

St. John Chrysostom, in his sermon on the departed, says: "You complain that you suffer, having lost him who was the joy of your life. Listen, my good friend; supposing you had given your daughter in marriage to some good and honorable man, who went with her to a distant country, and made her rich and happy; — would not her happiness soothe the grief you feel at the separation? How can you venture to weep and refuse to be comforted, since your child has been taken to Himself by God, your Lord and King, and not by any earthly friend or relative?"

If only parents could hear the tender greetings sent down to them by their children from above, their tears of sorrow would soon give place to those of joy.

St. Jerome, in a letter of consolation addressed to his friend Paula, represents her dead daughter Blesilla as saying: "Dear Mother; if you desire my welfare, trouble not my peace and joy by your tears. You fancy perhaps that I am lonely; but I live in a goodly company. I see many here whom I knew not before. I am with Mary, the Mother of our Lord, and the holy women mentioned in the gospel. You pity me for leaving the world, but now it is I rather who feel for you and all our family, because you still languish in the prison of the flesh, and daily have to contend with a host of enemies who are seeking to destroy you" (*Ep.* 39, *ad Paulam*).

Eleven days before his death, in 1591, St. Aloysius Gonzaga wrote thus to his mother: "I beg you, my honored Mother, to be careful not to withstand God's infinite goodness by bewail-

ing as dead one who will live in God's presence, and be able to benefit you by his prayers far more than was possible here. Our separation will not last long; we shall see one another again in heaven and rejoice incessantly, being united with our Redeemer, praising him to the best of our power, and proclaiming His boundless mercy."

Happy are the parents who have "an angel in heaven," happier still if, though fearing for his innocence, they were too weak to protect it. Their child is in the company of all innocent children, and of all the saints and angels, but he does not forget his parents; he knows that his very existence and salvation are partly due to them, that from their lips he first heard God's name, and learnt to love Him and pray to Him. He never ceases to love and intercede for his parents on earth, and when their last hour comes, he will hasten to meet them. The joy that they felt when gazing on the face of their firstborn was as nothing in comparison with the rapture with which they will meet him again in heaven.

> Ah, Saints in heaven may pray with earnest will
> And pity for their weak and erring brothers;
> Yet there is prayer in heaven more tender still —
> The little children pleading for their mothers.
>
> A. A. Procter: *Links with Heaven.*

III. The Death of Parents, Relatives, and Friends

The love of parents for their children never dies, nor does that of good children for their parents; in fact it gains strength as the years roll by. An aged father or mother may not be able to accomplish much, but, when they have passed away, their children realize that their mere affection was something which nothing on earth can replace.

It is only when our parents have left us that we feel how intensely we loved them. The parting reveals the countless strands that united us with them. We discover in our souls an unexpected wealth of affection which we never before had occasion to gauge, and in spite of the pain caused by this discovery it is fraught with consolation.

To lose good parents early is unspeakably bitter, but it is in one respect more distressing to lose them later, for then we are better able to appreciate them and so much keener is the pain of

our loss. Even grown-up sons and daughters well able to provide for themselves deeply mourn the loss of the parents with whom they felt always contented and at home, whose counsel and sympathy never failed them, and from whom they received the purest and most unselfish love. Mgr. de Ségur says that on the day when he lost his mother he became suddenly old. St. Augustine tells us that his heart was full of inexpressible sorrow and his eyes overflowed with tears as he closed his mother's eyes (*Conf.* IX, c. 12).

When the news of his mother's death reached him during the Crusade in Palestine, St. Louis burst into tears, flung himself on his knees, wrung his hands and exclaimed, "My Lord and my God! Thanks be to Thee for having left me my beloved mother as long as it seemed good to Thee, and for having now called her to Thyself according to Thy good pleasure" (*Vita per Fr. Gaufredum*). This was an expression of sorrow befitting a Christian.

In his sermon at the funeral of his father, also named Gregory, St. Gregory Nazianzen says, "Now he can benefit us much more by his prayers than he benefited us hitherto by his counsel; for having laid aside the fetters of the body, he is so much nearer God" (*Orat.* 19, *in patrem*).

To certain children, whose mother had died early, Adolf Kolping wrote as follows: "Later in life we often stand still in amazement when we consider how wonderfully God has ordered everything for us; when we perceive more and more plainly that those very sorrows, from which at the moment we shrank in terror, have been the most blessed turning-points in our lives. I lost my beloved mother at an age when, humanly speaking, she was most indispensable to me. But I did not really lose her, as I foolishly supposed, for only then could I truly rejoice in her glorified love, that was far better than it could be here below. I felt her protection, so that I have cause to thank God for having purified her love at the right time, so as to give it greater force than was possible whilst she lived on earth."

Bishop Sailer exclaims: "I thank thee, dearest Mother; for ever shall I be thy debtor; whenever I call to mind thy face and gestures, thy life, sufferings, silence, and labors, thy hand raised to bless me, and thy continual prayer, it seems as if a sense of

religion, a realization of eternal life, were born anew in me. Nothing has ever destroyed this feeling, no doubts, no contrary example, no pain, no oppression and no sin. It still lives within me, and will live on for ever, although it is more than sixty years since you left this world."

In obedience to our Lord's summons our parents pass away from this life to the eternal home that He has promised. They go before us to prepare a dwelling there for their children. Although withdrawn from sight they have not left us orphans, for their love encompasses us, and we are continually reminded of it. They cannot forget that we are their children, closely resembling them, and that we love and long for them. Therefore they pray for us before God's throne, and guard us on our way that we may not fail to meet them again; and meantime we look forward with impatience to the hour of this reunion.

Those who mourn the loss of a brother or sister will find comfort in St. Ambrose (*De excessu Satyri,* I). The great Archbishop of Milan had a brother named Satyrus, a young man adorned with every virtue. Nature had done her utmost to strengthen the bond of affection between them, for they resembled one another so closely as often to be mistaken one for the other. St. Ambrose tells us that he loved no one so dearly as his brother, and so complete was their sympathy that if one fell ill the other suffered likewise, and even a brief separation caused them intense pain. It is easy to imagine the grief felt by the Archbishop when Satyrus died suddenly; yet St. Ambrose regretted his outburst of sorrow, and said that such lamentations were pardonable only in the case of unbelievers, who think that their loved ones have gone for ever. "O my brother," he exclaims, "thou hast gone before me; make ready for me an abode in that dwelling which is henceforth the object of my heart's desire. On earth we had all things in common; so shall it be in heaven. I beseech thee, leave me not too long here; for I am consumed with longing for thee. Behold, I am on my way; expect me; I hasten, so come to my aid. If I seem to thee to tarry, urge me on. Never again wilt thou return, therefore I must come to thee."

St. Ambrose found comfort in the hope of meeting Satyrus in the other world, and in perpetual intercourse with him, and he depicts their reunion in most glowing colors.

St. Gregory Nazianzen was deeply attached to his brother Basil, and consoled himself and other mourners with the following words (*Orat.* XX): "Basil has not forsaken us; he is in heaven and offers there to God the sacrifice of prayer for you and for me. . . . O holy and beloved brother, look down upon us from heaven. Check the conflict aroused by the flesh, and obtain for us from God the grace to stand firm. Guide our ways towards what is best, and, when this short and toilsome journey is over, may we join thee in the blest abode of heavenly Sion, that, being reunited in immortal life, we may with pure, clear vision behold the most blessed Trinity, and after the fulfilment of our wishes may obtain the crown, the reward of our arduous struggles."

St. Augustine wrote a beautiful letter to Sapida, whose brother Timotheus, deacon of the Church at Carthage, had just died (Aug. *Epistola* 263). The following passage occurs in it: "Be steadfast in virtue, that thou mayst live with thy brother, who died in such a way as now to be alive. Thou hast indeed cause to weep; no more wilt thou see thy brother, who cared as did no one else for thee, going in and out of the sacred temple, busied in the service of the Church. Never again wilt thou hear his well known voice speaking tenderly to thee from the depths of his loving, devoted and anxious heart. To think of these things, and to have to lose them, after having been so long accustomed to them, cuts to the quick and fills the eyes with tears. Yet lift up thy heart, and thy tears will be dried. Only the outward manifestations of love have ceased; the deep, true love, with which Timotheus loved his Sapida, remains. It is stored up safely in its shrine, hidden in the great treasure of love, laid up with Christ our Lord. Does the man who deposits his money in safety, lose it? On the contrary, when it is out of his sight, and he knows that it is safe, he troubles no more about it. If then a covetous man can be at ease when his money is well placed, how can love, that comes from heaven, lament the loss of its treasure entrusted to God's care. . . . O my daughter, thy brother's soul is alive, and his body sleeps, but does not one who sleeps, awaken? God has taken his soul to Himself, and will restore to him his body, for He took it, not to destroy but to transform it. With everlasting joy in prospect we must not mourn excessively."

St. Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, had to mourn the death of Gerhard, who was his brother both by kindred and in religion. On the day after this sad loss, while he was expounding the Canticle of Canticles to the monks, he was suddenly overcome by grief and burst into tears. "Hitherto," he said, "I have restrained my feelings and concealed my sorrow; faith alone controlled my heart. I succeeded in refraining from tears, but not from mourning. I was deeply distressed and yet uttered no word, but my grief, being stifled, grew more bitter for want of an outlet." Then the Abbot gave free play to his emotions, and so relieved his overburdened heart. He did not hesitate to reveal his innermost feelings and to let everyone see the true and genuine affection that had bound up his heart with his brother's. He spoke of the magnitude of his loss and of Gerhard's virtues and merits, that far surpassed all praise. "Therefore let every kind and compassionate man be considerate towards me, and in a spirit of gentleness tolerate me in my affliction and sorrow. My tears are but the expression of human feeling, and not the tribute of custom." Finally he ceased to weep, and consoled himself with the truths of holy religion, and especially with the hope of meeting Gerhard again. "May God grant that I have not lost thee, but sent thee on before, and that I may be united with thee at last in the place whither thou art gone" (Bern. *In cantica, sermo* 26). This unprepared speech, coming straight from the saint's heart, is a model of lively and almost impassioned eloquence. The learned Merlo Horstius, when commenting on it, remarks, "Behold how far these holy men are from that icy indifference that short-sighted people mistake for nobility of mind."

Whoever has lost a friend should remember St. Ambrose (*De obitu Valent.*). The young Emperor Valentinian died suddenly on the very day appointed for his baptism. Ambrose was preparing to perform the solemn ceremony when the news of the Emperor's death reached him, and the shock was intensified by the fact that only a few years previously Valentinian's brother, the Emperor Gratian, had also died suddenly. The Archbishop now beseeches God not to separate the two brothers from one another or from their father, who had died before them. Then, addressing the two young emperors, he assures them that never should a day or a night pass without his praying for them.

"Before I forget you, O fair souls, shall my right hand be forgotten, and let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I number you not among my chief joys. Rather will I forget myself than you; and though my tongue may be silent, my heart, in which your names are indelibly written, shall speak in its stead. Alas for me! what a treasure have I lost in you! My Lord and my God, grant me to meet them again in the other life, as Thy love united us here below."

"How could my friend forget me," exclaims St. Augustine (*Conf.* ix. 3), "since Thou, O God, art now his happiness and Thou rememberest us."

When Hesychius and Julius took leave of one another before their martyrdom, the former said: "My friend Julius, be faithful to thy promise, and when thou hast received the crown, prepared for those who hope in God, remember thy Hesychius. I shall follow thee. Salute, I pray thee, Pasicrates and Valentius, servants of God, who by their blissful martyrdom have reached our Lord before me." Julius pressed his friend once more to his heart, and gave him the kiss of peace, saying: "Hesychius, my brother, come as soon as may be. Be sure that thy greeting will be conveyed to the holy martyrs." Having said these words, he offered his neck to the executioner. Equally touching scenes are met in the acts of the Martyrdom of St. Dionysia of Lampsacus and of Severus the priest.

The Fathers and heroic champions of the faith sought, like us, to alleviate the pain of parting by looking forward to a happy reunion in the other life. They were all certain that those who fell asleep in the Lord were not dead, but remembered their relatives and friends on earth, cherishing a peculiar affection for them, and helping them to the utmost of their power. Their love and care will not grow cold and vanish when the objects of it, now in the Land of exile, reach their home above, and meet once more the friends who have gone before.

CHAPTER XVII

ANXIETIES

I. The Lot of Unbaptized Infants

NOTHING perhaps causes deeper sorrow than the death of a dearly loved child, but as a rule there is abundant consolation with which to heal the wound inflicted by the loss. What, on the other hand, must be the agony of parents who do not possess the certainty of having an angel in heaven, and who cannot cherish the hope to meet there their treasure again?

Unhappily there are a vast number of children's souls that will never enjoy the happiness of heaven, for these infants have died without baptism; and are, therefore, undoubtedly excluded from heavenly or supernatural happiness.

Before our Lord founded the Church, infants shared in the grace of justification through the so-called sacrament of nature. God wills the salvation of all men, not excepting children still incapable of using their reason, and hence theologians suppose that at that time some means of salvation existed even for them. It consisted in the offering or dedication of the child to God by his parents, who believed in the future Messiah. In the case of male children, circumcision on the eighth day after birth was the prescribed form of the sacrament of nature among the Jews. Female children and all infants of pagan parentage received this sacrament by means of a religious ceremony of some kind. This vicarious action on the part of an adult was not so much the cause or vehicle of justifying grace, as the condition on which God promised and bestowed it for our Redeemer's sake.

After the Sacrament of Baptism was instituted and made universally obligatory, it became absolutely necessary to salvation. Twice did our Saviour say to Nicodemus, "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John iii. 5; cf. v. 3). It is impossible

to evade these words, and we must believe that no one has any right to, or prospect of, the Beatific Vision who has not received the baptism of water, or of blood, or of desire. Consequently the Pelagians and Socinians were wrong when they maintain that all unbaptized infants are admitted to heaven; the Calvinists limit this privilege of infants to the offspring of Christian parents, but this, too, is a mistake. Unbaptized children have not been brought to Christ, and therefore are not quickened and saved by Him. The Pelagians quite unjustifiably argued from our Lord's words, "In my Father's house are many mansions," that there must be a place in heaven where children who have died unbaptized can share the Beatific Vision.

Theologians in every age have tried to bring the article of faith, that has been invariably taught by the Church, and was defined by the Council of Trent, into harmony with God's mercy. Some have had recourse to the expedient of imagining that at the hour of death a sudden development of the child's mental faculties takes place, so that he can use his reason and free-will, recognize natural and supernatural truths, distinguish between good and evil, and choose between life and death. In this way he may desire baptism, and so receive the grace of justification.

Such a theory is arbitrary and devoid of all foundation. It involves so many anomalies that we are obliged to reject it. Of course the mysteries of the last moments are hidden from us, but precisely because the time of death is shrouded in impenetrable darkness, it is very doubtful whether it is invariably lighted up by a spiritual illumination. The theory lacks the support of Christian antiquity and of the teaching authority of the Church, and it breaks down at once when we reflect that baptized children also would have to be assumed to obtain power to use their reason and free-will before death. If this were so, they would be in danger of resisting the grace offered them, and consequently of being lost for ever. The Church teaches nothing to justify us in fearing that this may be the case; on the contrary she tells us that the souls of baptized infants are in heaven, and so they are not mentioned when we pray for the dead.

Other theories, such as that of a mystical baptism by their guardian angels, and that of a vicarious baptism of desire on the part of the parents, are equally untenable, and we must con-

clude that children who die unbaptized enter the next world stained with original sin. As death ends the temporal existence of every human being without exception, and as the irrevocable sentence is pronounced immediately after death, it follows that neither prayers, nor good works on the part of their parents, can obtain for such children admission to the state of grace and glory. No doubt this is a hard saying, but afflicted parents should take to heart the words of Cardinal Bellarmine: "Our pity cannot benefit these little ones, nor can our severity hurt them; but it may injure us very gravely if, through a mistaken pity for them, we assert anything repugnant to Holy Scripture and the doctrine of the Church. We must not listen to our own hearts, but to the clear statements of Holy Scripture, the Councils and the Fathers" (*De amiss. gratiae et statu peccati*, VI, c. 2).

Let us, then, seek counsel and consolation where our faith bids us seek them, and our quest will not be in vain.

Even St. Augustine, who does not agree with the earlier Fathers on this subject, but expresses a very stern opinion regarding unbaptized infants, does not go so far as to say that they had better never been born. They will not curse the day of their birth, nor say with the doomed, "Let the day perish wherein I was born . . . let that day be turned into darkness; let not God regard it from above, and let not the light shine upon it" (Job iii. 3, 4).

In spite of the great reputation that St. Augustine enjoys as being the chief of all the Doctors of the Church, his harsh opinion on the subject of unbaptized infants has been abandoned in favor of a more benignant theory. One such view was current in the Middle Ages and found favor at the Council of Trent, although no definite decision was pronounced. "Augustine seems to torment the little ones too severely," says Dominic de Soto (*De nat. et grat.* I, c. 14). "Hence there are very few, perhaps only one — and he speaks with reservations — who adopt his theory, and they are called the children's torturers." The great theologians of the Middle Ages, including St. Thomas Aquinas, who generally follows St. Augustine very closely, almost unanimously declare that unbaptized children are spared all physical torments. This opinion was challenged in 1696 by the learned Cardinal Sfondrati, but it agrees with the decision

pronounced by Innocent III against the Waldensians, and with Pius VI's condemnation of the Jansenistic pseudo-synod of Pistoia. This synod had described as a Pelagian fiction the traditional belief that such children escape the fiery torments of the lost. Pain of sense is the just penalty for deliberate, personal sins committed by a man who turns from God to creatures, and seeks forbidden pleasures in them. Such offences cannot, of course, be imputed to infants.

Christ did not say to Nicodemus that all unbaptized persons must go to hell, but only that they could not enter heaven. On the last day they, too, will hear the voice of the Son of God and rise from the dead, but they are numbered neither with those who have done good, and therefore rise to life, i.e., supernatural bliss, nor with those who have done evil, and therefore rise to judgment and condemnation. They have done nothing, and so have no part in the rewards and penalties assigned to those who are judged by their works.

The most suitable retribution for them is the loss of the Beatific Vision; they are not God's children, and cannot claim to be heirs of the kingdom of heaven. Now it is absolutely certain that the possession of God forms the essential part of the joys of heaven, and the loss of God makes hell what it is. Yet it is an open question whether exclusion from supernatural bliss always and under all circumstances constitutes actual misery; in other words, whether unbaptized infants feel pain at their loss. Most eminent theologians believe that they do not.

We need not follow Didiot and suppose that they do not realize the imperfection of their state. They may do this without appreciating the magnitude of their loss. They do not know what heaven is, nor have they any clear idea of the contemplation and possession of God. Their knowledge goes no further than the light of reason, which may, perhaps, after their death attain the highest degree of development possible within its natural limits. They feel that they are deprived of grace and glory, but they suffer no pain on that account. Why should they grieve? surely not over the stain of original sin, that can never be taken away, because grief for such a cause would be akin to despair. Or over the punishment inflicted upon them because they are thus stained? Such grief would be rebellion

against God's ordinances and therefore would be sinful. Perhaps they feel a slight degree of sorrow? No, a slight degree would be out of proportion to the magnitude of their loss. St. Thomas remarks that the pain of punishment is proportionate to the pleasure taken in sin, and consequently the punishment for original sin exclusively will be painless.

St. Thomas goes on to point out that no sensible man lets his wishes soar higher than his powers and faculties permit, and that he is contented with what he is able to accomplish or attain. No one, he says, will worry because he cannot fly like a bird or reign as a king; he would do so only if he had fallen short of his natural position by his own fault and by neglect of his own abilities. The lost are tormented in conscience, because by their own fault they have missed their final end, which they might and should have reached, and because they have cut themselves for ever off from God, their highest Good, through their abuse of His graces. Unbaptized children are not in such a miserable and desperate plight. They never attained to the use of reason and free-will, and consequently were incapable of actual sin; they received no grace and consequently could not abuse it. Through no fault of their own they incurred the stain of original sin, and they carried it with them into eternity.

But must not they suffer if they think how in innocence they incurred and retain for ever the stain of guilt? No, for original sin is the inheritance of every human being, our Lady alone excepted. We cannot reject this inheritance without cursing the hour of our birth, or laying claim to a higher existence than is allotted to men; we have no reason to do the former and no right to do the latter. Unbaptized infants have full ground to feel aggrieved against those who through carelessness, if for no worse reason, are to blame for their remaining defiled with original sin. God did no wrong to the little ones by not violently interfering with the natural course of events, or by not forcibly preventing the culpable neglect of their fellow men, so as to secure their salvation. They needed but one thing, viz., baptism, to enable them to attain the supernatural end for which they were destined; this end, however, as well as the means whereby it is attained, is supernatural, and so man has by nature no sort of claim to it; it is a grace which God owes to no man but bestows of His voluntary goodness and love.

Children who have died without baptism may know that it was God's design to raise them from the natural order to that of grace and glory, and that they are excluded from supernatural happiness because the stain of original sin was not obliterated. They know that they are restricted in consequence to the natural order and to natural happiness, and that they are not where God intended them to be; but they perceive clearly that they had no claim upon supernatural bliss and no means of obtaining it, and therefore could not be God's children and heirs.

To demand admission to heaven whilst totally unable to secure it would be both foolish and sinful. The unbaptized do not desire what is unsuited to them, nor do they miss what is beyond their reach. They need and crave natural happiness, i.e., the perfect development of their purely natural abilities and powers, and the perfect gratification of their purely natural desire for happiness. Such an aim is in harmony with their nature, and to this they have a right; but they are not heirs of the kingdom of heaven.

Adults who miss their supernatural aim miss also the natural. In His unfathomable love God destines every human being without exception for something surpassing their natural powers of knowledge and volition. Moreover He has in readiness the means or graces requisite for the attainment of this destiny, and whoever despises them throws away his claim to any kind of happiness. Supposing a king appoints to a very high appointment a man of low birth, and receives nothing but ingratitude and insults in return, is he likely to be satisfied with sending this ungrateful subject back into private life without imposing any further penalty?

Unbaptized children wear no wedding garment, and so will not be admitted to the heavenly banquet. They must suffer to this extent; but as they have personally done no wrong, they do not deserve to be cast into outer darkness, and so to lose both natural and supernatural happiness. They are able and worthy to enjoy the former in full measure, and most modern theologians, as well as the most respected ancient writers, believe that they will do so, in virtue of Christ's merits, since He died for them also.

These infants lead a painless existence, and in this respect are happier than any one on earth; they delight in the perfec-

tion of their human nature, the harmonious development of their bodily and mental powers, and the fulfilment of their natural craving for happiness. They recognize God as their Lord and Creator, as the Author of all things, preserving the universe and directing the laws of nature. In comparison with their knowledge all the science on earth is as the babbling of children. They love God with a natural love proportionate to their knowledge, and this love is deep and eternal. They extol His might, that called them into existence, and they honor His providence, that orders and directs everything with loving wisdom, and perhaps allowed them to die young that so they might escape everlasting death.

For them, too, God is the final end and the supreme good; He is near them, not, indeed, in the sense in which He is with the saints in heaven, to whom He reveals the unfathomable depths of His being, and not in the sense in which He is near to the lost in Hell, who feel the force of His just vengeance. He draws the little ones so close to Him that the impulse of the creature to turn to the Creator — the impulse that He planted within them — is fully gratified, and with it their natural desire for happiness. He lets them taste His light, love, and joy, so that they perceive Him to be their kind and loving Father. In some way even unbaptized infants have access to God, not as children of the promise, like Isaac, but as heirs of the natural blessing, like Ishmael. They walk in His presence, contemplate His attributes and perfections, as reflected in His works, and thus they are confirmed in natural justice and virtue.

Finally, we need not assume that they are cut off from all intercourse with the saints. An infant at his mother's breast is everywhere at home; and so every place is heaven for the elect in glory, provided that God is with them, and He is present everywhere. They can traverse space freely, and be now here, now there, and yet always with God, and always in heaven; always receiving the measure of light and joy that they have deserved. Intercourse between them and unbaptized infants is neither inconceivable nor impossible; in fact we may reasonably think that it exists. The little ones derive their natural happiness not so much from God as from His works; why, then, should they not see His perfect creatures, and in them behold the results of His power, wisdom, and love? Why should they

not be instructed by them in the mysteries of His being? They do not see God, but they see those made in His image, radiant with glorious light; they do not see the Sun, but they see millions of little suns that derive their light from Him; they walk not in broad daylight, but in a starry night; uncreated beauty is hidden from their gaze, but they behold its reflection; their eyes are not, indeed transformed, but still they can perceive and delight in the glorious figures of the blest; they rest, not on our Lord's bosom, but in the arms of His disciples and rejoice with them.

That millions of other children, by no merit of their own, have received the grace of baptism and enjoy eternal salvation, does not trouble them, any more than the fact that they were not created angels. They feel no envy or ill-will at the greater happiness of others. They survey and extol the harmony and order among God's creatures, submit to His inscrutable decree, and adore His supreme majesty and glory, and the perfect and unlimited power with which He rules and orders all things. Intercourse with the happy saints in glory is to some extent a compensation for missing the joys of heaven.

Suarez asserts that our Lord's resurrection was the exemplar and pattern also of the resurrection of the bodies of children stained with original sin. Their bodies will, however, not partake in the supernatural gifts, but in respect of their natural perfection they will resemble the bodies of the just. We may assume that in stature and appearance they reach the stage of development that they would have attained in the prime of manhood. There will be nothing ugly or deformed, no sickness, hunger, or thirst, nothing to disturb their perfect well-being. They have no need of food or drink, they feel no inordinate desires and no passion. They possess the moral, mental, and corporal maturity that befits human nature when it is neither corrupted by sin nor raised by grace.

In this state of natural perfection and comparative bliss they await their parents, to whom they owe their birth. Therefore, to those also whose child has died unbaptized, we may say: "Do not despair; your child is safe and happy, and you will see him again; he will recognize you, and rejoice at being with you. You need not pity him; he will gaze at you with admiration at your glory, but he will feel no envy."

II. Doubts as to the Salvation of certain Adults

> We sinners were, e'en to our latest hour,
> Then light from heaven made our vision clear.
> So by repentance and love's pardoning power
> We passed from life as reconciled to God.
>
> Dante, *Purgatory*, V, 53.

The prospect of meeting one another again in the next world does much to alleviate the sorrow of those who mourn the dead. What, however, must be the grief of those who have no such prospect, and to whom the darkness of the grave seems but the prelude to that exterior darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth? Separation is painful, but it becomes unbearable agony when to it is added fear about the salvation of the departed one. "Sorrow such as the world feels for the dead," wrote Bishop von Ketteler, "we only feel, though in a far more intense degree, when we witness the death of one dear to us, for whom we have no hope of a glorious resurrection. This thought causes me genuine horror."

It would be nothing short of a miracle if a person could be serene and resigned whilst tortured by a well-grounded fear that some dear dead friend is doomed to misery for all eternity. The saints in heaven can accomplish this, but as a rule a mourner does not cease to love one whom he has loved in life, even when he has doubts as to whether his friend is saved.

Every faithful Christian shudders at the thought of any one, though he may be a perfect stranger, being lost for ever; what, then, must it be to suffer such agonizing fear for a dearly loved father, mother, wife, child, or friend?

Some venture in such a case to say to the survivor, "Adore God's inexplicable judgments, for He reveals His greatness in His justice, no less than in His mercy." Comforters such as these forget that even among Christians silent resignation to everything that God does, just because He does it, is not of every-day occurrence. We dare not recommend cold renunciation of all prospect of future meeting as a remedy for the torturing anxiety felt by one suffering from most grievous sorrow. No, we must never mourn as those who have no hope, in every case we must hope, even, if needs be, against hope.

The Apostle tells us that no one knows whether he deserves God's love or hatred, whether he is numbered among the elect or the reprobate; and consequently still less can any one feel absolute certainty regarding the lot of his friends. We often feel some amount of anxiety about them, in spite of having every reason for hope. Such anxiety is not an insult to them, but the expression of our love, which suggests a fear that the departed may possibly have failed to reach their goal. It is easy to justify this fear, for great dangers attend the critical hour in which our foes, knowing that they have no time to lose, make desperate efforts to win the victory just when the pain of sickness and dread of approaching death disturb and confuse the mind and weaken the power to resist temptation. We know that the all-knowing, just, and holy Judge will call their souls to account for every idle word, and we remember how our Lord said that few enter in at the narrow gate, and find the way that leadeth to life (Matth. vii. 13, 14); and that many are called, but few are chosen (Matth. xx. 16). Such reflections are, indeed, apt to cause anxiety and fear, and yet it is unjust to the departed, as well as improper on the part of the survivors, to let confidence give place to agonizing doubt.

What right have we to abandon ourselves regarding the dead to feelings which we should reject for ourselves? We resist fear of death by calling up hope in God's mercy; had not our dear ones an equal right to do so, as long as they were alive? We believe that God is faithful and will never, least of all at our last hour, suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able to endure (1 Cor. x. 13); were they, when setting forth on their journey to eternity, exposed to the suggestions and attacks of their adversaries with none to help or defend them?

St. Mechtildis once prayed that a pious friend of hers might have a happy death, and represents our Lord as giving her the following assurance for her consolation: "What sensible man would voluntarily throw overboard the goods and merchandise that, after encountering violent storms, he has safely brought into harbor? As soon as I have brought to her haven and goal the soul which thou hast commended to me in prayer, and which I have preserved amid the many storms of life, and as soon as I have dealt with her according to my mercy, I shall welcome her to everlasting glory." On another similar occasion

the saint received almost the same reply: "He who is wise, does not throw away the gold that he has toiled to obtain and values very highly. In the same way I shall not abandon in eternity the friend whom thou hast commended to my care and whom I have sanctified by my humanity and quickened by my spirit in baptism" (Blosius, *Spiritual Necklace,* c. 12).

Our divine Redeemer desires above all things that all men should be saved, and therefore He will do His utmost that the dying may benefit by His precious Blood. It was His will to be deprived of all consolation during His own death-agony, in order that His followers may not feel forsaken in their last hour; by His death on the Cross He merited for all a happy departure from this world. The Holy Ghost never refuses His powerful aid, least of all to those in their last agony. Mary, the Mother of Mercy, offers a sure refuge to all in affliction, and she cannot witness with indifference the death struggles of her children, whom she accepted at the foot of the cross. The guardian angels watch over those entrusted to their care, and will certainly not forsake them when their peril is greatest. All the holy angels are ever ready to assist their future comrades in heaven, and cannot fail them at the critical moment. The saints in glory know by experience the terrors of death, and therefore will remember their brethren, especially when the end is near. The holy souls in purgatory can do nothing for themselves, but much for those who survive them, and they will give their help when it is most needed; how gratefully will they pray, then, in return for the kindness shown them in their suffering by their friends on earth! The Church prays that all her children may emerge victorious from their last conflict; and her intercession is not in vain.

May we look forward to meeting those again who have died suddenly without receiving the last Sacraments? We must remember that when God suddenly calls away one of our friends, it is in order to warn us to be vigilant, and work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. Sudden death is not in every case a punishment or a misfortune for the person thus unexpectedly called away, but it is invariably a serious warning to the survivors.

When any one who has led a Christian life dies suddenly, we may confidently hope that death found him well prepared.

There is no reason to assume that he was a grievous sinner, and was carried off just after committing a mortal sin. Moreover we may trust that God, in His boundless goodness and love, gave special graces at the moment of death, and dealt mercifully with the departed. If someone is forced to start unexpectedly on a journey, we are not offended if he does not take formal leave of us, or if his preparations are somewhat imperfect. In the same way God no doubt deals leniently with one who, owing to his hasty departure, has not explicitly renounced all disorderly inclinations, and appears before Him with garments not quite clean. This is at least the opinion of St. Francis of Sales. (Letter to President Frimiot, dated Oct. 7, 1604.)

Some anxious friend may be still in doubt and argue that this is all very well in the case of those who have lived virtuous lives, or have done long penance for their sins, or at least have had time before death to be reconciled to God and strengthened with the means of grace supplied by the Church. But "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away" (Matth. xi. 12). Can we class among the violent such as spent their time in frivolity and vice, caring nothing for God and His commandments, who perhaps intended to make their peace with Him before their death, but were summoned unawares before the judgment-seat? Can they be reckoned amongst the "few who are chosen?"

Is it true, we ask in reply, that the majority of mankind are lost? A short discussion of this solemn question seems unavoidable, for it fills many pious souls with fear and anguish. Not only a desire to console the sorrowful and to reassure the doubtful, but also the type of philosophy now in vogue demands a more detailed investigation of this subject.

A common but very disastrous error is that cold and heartless pessimism, which represents the world as a wilderness, life as a problem, and man as a being whose origin is folly, and whose existence is wretched. The advocates of this unholy theory, that logically leads to suicide, note with satisfaction the prevalence among Christians of melancholy views regarding the future life. Having no comprehension of the consciousness of worth that each of us has within himself, they find no difficulty in proving that in this world most men experience far more pain

and sorrow than happiness and joy. Even those who are rich in worldly possessions do not conceal their discontent, but, like Solomon, acknowledge frankly that all is vanity, and that life as such has but little attraction for them. Christians look forward to enjoying in the next life abundant compensation for their sufferings here, but the enemies of Christianity contemptuously reject this form of consolation. They proclaim to others, who have little or no faith, that according to the opinion of orthodox Christians the vast majority of human beings will after death be most unhappy. It is, they say, very doubtful whether there will be any happiness in the other life, and therefore our enjoyment of the present life is much more rational.

The tendency of the age is to sink into the morass of materialism and sensuality, to abandon all anticipation of heaven, to stifle every better impulse of the human heart, and in the gloom of pessimism to give way to weariness of life and despair. Consequently it is very necessary to strengthen the confidence and joyful activity of those who are still well-disposed. Christianity is identified not merely with the belief in, but also with the fact and consolation of the Redemption. Why should we always dwell upon judgment, condemnation, and fear? Why not rather preach mercy and hope, as did St. Leonard of Port Maurice in the 18th Century? He tried to make sinners with dry and hardened hearts realize God's mercy, so that they might yield to contrition and sorrow, and be quickened to new life by hope and charity. In this way the famous missionary obtained the conversion and probable salvation of many thousands.

If anything can touch a hardened heart, it is the thought of the love that prompted our heavenly Father to give us His only-begotten Son, so that all who believe in Him, may not perish, but have eternal life. He came, the God of mercy and consolation, to seek and to win over the wanderers by His love. He Himself is love, light, peace, and joy. The Light of the World shone first in the stable at Bethlehem; this tiny spot alone was illumined with heavenly radiance when the whole earth was wrapped in deep darkness, pierced by no ray of hope. This light that shone on Christmas night is found only in Christianity; elsewhere all is dark, cold, barren, vague, and uncertain; anxiety and despair prevail abroad.

But even in the temple of truth the light does not penetrate

equally in all directions; some spaces remain obscure; however, this mysterious gloom should not alarm or repel us, but direct our thoughts to the glorious future, when we shall see God as He is, and every mystery will be revealed, every problem solved, and truth manifested most clearly. Whoever feels uneasy regarding these obscure spaces has only to turn to the bright centre, and he will be happy, provided he is not too blind to see.

Our Lord's well-known saying, "Many are called, but few are chosen," occurs at the end of the parable of the laborers in the vineyard. The obvious meaning of the words is this:— Many, i.e., all, are called to work in the vineyard and to receive wages, whether they were called early or late, if only they listened to the summons. Few, however, viz., those called at the eleventh hour, are favored by exceptional conditions. No one has a right to this favor, it is a free grace bestowed by the lord of the vineyard on whomsoever he chooses. Those chosen to enjoy such exceptional favors are few, not in number, but in comparison with the entire number of all, who are called and who receive their reward.

Only the human beings of one hour, the last one, are called or chosen to the grace of the *New* Dispensation. The Gospel is the best means of interpreting the Gospel; and in twenty passages of the New Testament "choice" or "election" means a call to believe in Christ. The number of the chosen is truly not small in itself, but small in comparison with the great number of those called earlier, i.e., before the coming of Christ. And how favorable indeed are the conditions for those called in the eleventh hour! Sustained by the grace that, since Christ's death for our redemption, has been given abundantly to men, they can earn full wages by comparatively short and easy work. Adam, Noe, Abraham, Moses, and all the other patriarchs and prophets, were called at the first, third, sixth, or ninth hour. They labored long in the vineyard, and after death waited hundreds, some even thousands, of years for the payment earned by them. Those on the other hand who were called in the eleventh hour are the apostles, martyrs, and Christians in general, who, after only a few years' labor, received their reward. What a difference: Noe and the penitent thief enter Paradise at the same time! Such is the explanation given by Bellarmine, Salmeron, Dechamps, and others of this much debated passage.

The famous preacher Massillon deserves severe censure for his sermon on the small number of the elect. The discourse is perfect in form, but misleading in its line of argument. Voltaire praised it as a masterpiece, and its immediate effect was extraordinary, both in the church of St. Eustache and in the royal chapel at Versailles, where Massillon repeated it before Louis XIV. His audience seemed struck by lightning, but sermons that produce such drastic results are more apt to deaden and confuse than to raise and influence men's minds. Nowadays a preacher like Massillon would not have much success, even in France. Quite recently A. Castelein has pleaded in impassioned language for a merciful answer to the question under discussion (A. Castelein, *Le Rigorisme. Le nombre des élus*, Paris, 1899); many of his expressions are sharply criticized by two Belgian Redemptorists, J. Coppin (*La question de l'Évangile: "Seigneur, y aura-t-il peu de sauvés?"* 1899) and F. H. Godts (*De paucitate salvandorum quid docuerunt sancti?* 1899); they even go so far as to accuse Castelein of heresy. It is possible, however, to avoid offending against the doctrinal and moral teaching of the Church without expressing harsh opinions about the difficulty of salvation.

The eleventh hour, "the fullness of time," is for all men the beginning of salvation, but it is offered only to a few, to the "children of the household," to the "chosen people of Israel." Even amongst these there were comparatively few who allowed themselves to be chosen, and who believed. In spite of the growth of the Church, the preaching of salvation in Christ has reached comparatively few people, even during the time of grace, and countless millions still are in the shadow of death and the darkness of paganism. How few there are that are chosen to be born and brought up in the true faith; to them the way to heaven is rendered particularly easy!

Any attempt to discuss the number of the elect on a creed basis seems inadvisable. Suarez, St. Francis of Sales, Faber, and others include the majority of Catholics among the elect, but this calculation may easily be misinterpreted in two distinct ways. Catholics may be tempted by this flattering opinion to give way to Pharisaical pride and presumption, whilst non-Catholics may certainly feel disposed to pronounce the teaching of the Church harsh and uncharitable.

A Catholic baptismal certificate is no more a free pass to heaven than is external separation from the Church by no fault of one's own a sign of final rejection. The Catholic Church undoubtedly teaches that she alone knows the way to eternal salvation, and can show it to men. She must uphold this doctrine if she is not to surrender the justification of her own existence; and so must every other religious body make a similar assertion, as otherwise it would pronounce its own death sentence and repel its adherents. Many stand outside the Church, not through arrogance, self-deception, or carelessness, but in error; they honestly seek the truth, avail themselves of the graces offered them, live according to their faith and convictions, and with contrite hearts ask God to pardon their sins; — these all belong inwardly and invisibly to the true Church of Christ, and will be saved through her.

The parable of the talents shows most clearly that everyone will have to give account for the measure of graces he has received. To whom much is given, of him much will be required. No one can square his accounts by merely professing a certain faith. If Christ makes the way easy to any man by placing more abundant grace at his disposal, that man has to look forward to a more severe judgment than another, who was forced to content himself with crumbs from the table of the divine bounty. God, who searcheth the heart, alone knows where the will to grasp every means of working out salvation is really and actively present.

If we wish to apply our Lord's words to an individual we may say: God seeks and calls each man in the morning, at noon, and in the evening of life, in fact, at every hour. Many do not respond to the call until life is near its close, but even an evening sacrifice is pleasing to God. Perhaps our Redeemer's last glance catches the sinner's eye, so that, like Peter, he goes and weeps. Perhaps the last appeal of the Holy Ghost, who has long knocked in vain at the door of the sinner's heart, reaches his ears. It does not take long for justifying grace to accomplish its work; and as soon as the will honestly and seriously assents, the deed is done. Until the last breath is drawn "the acceptable time, the day of salvation" is present. None can fathom the wonderful and loving ordinances of God; He Who could raise up children to Abraham out of stones, Who could

instantly convert a thief, and transform Saul, the persecutor, into Paul, the Apostle; He can also at any moment change a hardened sinner into a saint, provided only that such a one co-operates freely with the grace bestowed on him.

> 'And ye, O mortals, judge not hastily,
> For even we, who look on God's own face,
> The number of the elect not yet descry.'
>
> 'DANTE, *Paradise*, XX, 133.

In proportion to the whole number of the saved there are, no doubt, few who, like the penitent thief, are so happy as to have obtained their great reward at the hour of death. St. Augustine says, "One of the two thieves was saved, therefore no one should despair of God's mercy; but only one was saved, therefore no one should rely presumptuously on God's mercy."

When one of His disciples asked whether only a few would be saved, our Lord spoke of the narrow gate to heaven (Luke xiii. 23, 24). According to Bellarmine this gate is the practice of the virtues of faith, hope, charity, and humility. When Christ said that most people follow the way of destruction, and fail to find the way of life, He stated an obvious fact. In the first place there are few who find and belong to the visible Church on earth, and amongst those few who have entered the Church by the narrow gate of baptism, the majority are probably not such as abandon vanities, follies, and passions, and tread the difficult path of duty and virtue. Neither does it follow, however, that they will continue to the end on the way of perdition, and never take to the path of virtue.

Among those chosen to grace are people of every age and land; they are called at every hour until the end of their life, and all receive sufficient grace to work out their salvation. Those chosen to salvation are all those regarding whom God knows that they will die in the state of grace. He alone knows how many will be saved; we only know that their number will be very great. "Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven" (Matth. viii. 11). St. John beheld "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and in sight of the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands" (Apoc. vii. 9). The separation of the good from

the wicked at the last day is compared by our Lord with that of the wheat from the cockle, and of the sheep from the goats; now it is not usual for the cockle to be more abundant than the wheat, nor for the goats in a herd to outnumber the sheep. Of the three servants only *one* was worthless, burying his talent in the earth, and being condemned in consequence. At the marriage feast *one* guest alone was found without a wedding garment and cast out. These parables seem to justify the assumption that the majority of Christians will be saved. Several arguments in favor of the greater number of the elect can be based on the fitness of things. Of the angels only a small proportion were lost, and this fact supports the view that also of men the number of the lost will be small. And do not God's goodness, love, and mercy actually require this to be the case? Another consideration tending to the same conclusion is that the infinite value of the incarnation, life, passion, and death of Christ, His infinite merits, and the power of His prayer, seem to be lost, if the blessed fruits of His work of redemption, in which all without exception are intended to participate, should benefit only a few. Christ's majesty and His triumph over sin and Satan appear less glorious if, in spite of all that He has done, most of His creatures after all fall under the dominion of His conquered foe. Moreover, the bliss of heaven is rendered the more perfect the more the number of its inhabitants increases, because the elect feel the happiness of each of their companions as if it were their own.

This more merciful opinion regarding the number of the saved is supported by passages of Holy Scripture, by statements of eminent theologians, and by several weighty arguments. It is neither possible nor necessary for us to find out *how* the majority of mankind can be saved; but it is both possible and necessary to hope for our own salvation and that of others, and to rely on God's mercy, for He allows no one to perish save by his own fault. St. Thomas tells us that even a savage, who follows the voice of his conscience, undoubtedly receives the light that he requires, either through some missionary or by interior illumination.

What, then, can we say when death occurs under such unfavorable circumstances, that we feel the salvation of the departed soul to be at least doubtful? Although all outward

signs of a good death may be absent, no one can prove that it was impossible, nor ought we ever to assume that any man has died in his sins. We have no right to judge a dead man, to his own Master he standeth and falleth; only our Lord can pronounce sentence. Therefore even in most hopeless cases we should rely on God's mercy, for He continues to seek the most obstinate sinner even to his last breath, offering him the aid of His powerful grace and saying, "Why will you die, O house of Israel?" (Ezech. xxxiii. 11).

We ought not, however, to find consolation in the boundless riches of God's mercy without remembering that it would be an act of abominable presumption to make them an excuse for recklessness in matters concerning our eternal salvation, for the continuance of a sinful life, and for rash confidence in a death-bed conversion. Whoever is guilty of such reckless conduct as this will have abundant reason to regret his rashness and folly.

God "will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. ii. 4). This "will" is not a mere desire, with chance results, but the serious, decided and effectual will of God, who cares for the welfare of His creatures far more than they themselves can do, and consequently at every moment offers each of them the grace necessary for salvation. We must, therefore, never say that there is a moment in a sinner's life when God determines to abandon him completely, and withdraw from him all supernatural aids in the salvation of his soul. To think that He could forsake a sinner is contrary to the Christian conception of God. Dominic Soto says: "It is to me an absolutely assured truth, and I believe that all the holy Doctors, worthy of the name, share my conviction, that no man during his mortal life is ever forsaken by God." Such is the doctrine of St. Augustine, who declares that even those who are spiritually blind are not altogether deprived of the light of divine grace, and that even the most ungodly should hope in the Lord's mercy. We may despair of the conversion of the devil, but not of a man, as long as the breath of life remains in him. God does not always work miracles for the salvation of souls, but very seldom does He limit His help to the minimum degree of grace sufficient for it. In every age, even before the promulgation of the Law of

Charity, He has proclaimed and displayed boundless mercy in His dealings with men. For a hundred years He made Noe preach repentance; if there had been ten just men in Sodom He would have spared the sinful city; He pardoned David, Ezechias, Manasses, Jonas, and the Ninivites, and treated His chosen people with the utmost patience when they became faithless. "With the Lord there is mercy, and with Him plentiful redemption, and He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities" (Ps. cxxix. 7). "Thou, O Lord, art sweet and mild, and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon Thee" (Ps. lxxxv. 5). "The mercies of the Lord that we are not consumed, because His commiserations have not failed" (Lam. iii. 22). "The Lord is good to them that hope in Him, to the soul that seeketh Him" (ibid. v. 25). "The bruised reed He shall not break, and smoking flax He shall not quench" (Is. xlii. 3). "As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezech. xxxiii. 11). "If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow; and if they be red as crimson, they shall be white as wool" (Is. i. 18).

The greatest proof of God's inexhaustible love and boundless mercy was given when He "spared not even His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all. How hath He not also, with Him, given us all things?" (Rom. viii. 32). "For God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting. For God sent not His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by Him" (John iii. 16, 17).

Our crucified Saviour offers grace and pardon to even the worst of sinners. The Only-Begotten of the Father has loved us with an everlasting love, even as the Father has loved Him, and He became poor for our sake, that through His poverty we might be rich. For our sake He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death on the Cross; He became the reproach of men and the outcast of the people; He was wounded for our iniquities, He was bruised for our sins, He was offered because it was His own will; He delivered Himself for us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and He loved us even to the end. He Himself said, "Greater

love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John xv. 13).

These friends are the sinners, whom He welcomes as the father welcomed the prodigal son; He seeks them like the good shepherd seeking his sheep; He is patient with them as with the unfruitful fig-tree, and forgives them all their debt, even though it amount to ten thousand talents. He finds out the sick who need a physician; Matthew the publican became His apostle; Zachaeus, a dishonest man, was His host; He showed favor to the Samaritan woman; He refused to condemn the woman taken in adultery; He forgave Mary Magdalene; He pardoned the dropsical man, and He wept over impenitent Jerusalem.

St. Augustine, the famous penitent, who had had personal experience of God's mercy, says with truth that no one can sin so much as God can forgive. In fact the mysteries of the mercy revealed by our dear Redeemer in His bitter Passion cannot fail to fill the most dejected sinner with hope. Our gentle Lord would not even repel Judas, the traitor; He called him "friend," and allowed him to kiss Him. When Peter denied Him He did not deprive him of the dignity as His representative an earth, but looked at him reproachfully, thus giving him new grace. He refused to call down fire from heaven to destroy His enemies when they were inflicting indescribable tortures upon Him, blaspheming and cursing Him even in the hour of His death. He did not bid the earth open to swallow up these monsters of iniquity; heaven and earth and all creation stood ready to avenge Him, but even on the cross He harbored "thoughts of peace and not of affliction" (Jer. xxix. 11). Whilst His enemies taunted Him He prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." From His lips issued no word of anger or revenge, He thought only of grace and reconciliation. The fire that consumed Him was that of charity, not of hatred. "With a strong cry and tears He offered up prayers and supplications to Him that was able to save Him from death, and He was heard for His reverence" (Hebr. v. 7). His prayers were for all mankind, and they will never lose their efficacy, but benefit even the dying sinner.

That conversion is possible at the hour of death is proved by the case of the penitent thief; therefore no one should, like

Cain and Judas, despair on account of the multitude and enormity of his sins, and for the same reason the survivors may always hope that a dead friend has been saved. The first word spoken by our Saviour on the cross concerned not His beloved Mother, not St. John, His favorite disciple, not the women weeping at the foot of the cross, but His implacable enemies; and the second was addressed to the penitent thief crucified beside Him — so ardent was His love for sinners even during His death-agony.

The criminal at His side took heart to beg: "Lord, remember me, when Thou comest to Thy kingdom." Our gentle Saviour uttered no complaints and gave no answer to the hideous abuse of His foes, but He could not be silent when the penitent thief made this request. Far from reproaching him, He granted the favor at once, giving far more than was asked, for He promised him the joys of Paradise that very day. Thus a man whose whole life had been passed in crime, who had even been guilty of murder, was on the very verge of the abyss assured that before night he should be admitted to the company of the blessed in heaven — such is the power of Christ's prayer.

The impenitence of the other thief should warn us against the foolish and presumptuous idea that similar good fortune is in store for all sinners; nevertheless we may be sure that our divine Redeemer seeks the lost sheep now as zealously as He did during His life on earth, and that He is just as eager for the salvation of souls. His precious Blood was shed for all men, and, as St. Paul says, He is our Advocate, beseeching His heavenly Father to give us grace and forgiveness. He constantly renews His passion and death in an unbloody manner, offering it for all sinners, and commending the dying to His Father's care and mercy.

Full of consolation are the utterances of our Saviour recorded by certain saints to whom revelations were granted, such as St. Bridget, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Gertrude, St. Mechtildis, and others. They frequently heard our Lord say words to this effect: "My love of men is still just as great and incomprehensible as at the time of my passion. If it were possible for me to die as many times as there are lost souls in hell, I should offer my life with the greatest readiness and most perfect love, and endure for each individual soul the

same suffering and death that I endured for all collectively." St. Mechtildis complained once of the obduracy of a sinner, for whom she had long prayed, and then she heard a voice remonstrating with her and saying: "Be pitiful and pray for the poor sinners, whom I redeemed at so great a cost, and whom I now await, eagerly desiring their conversion. Just as I once offered myself up on the altar of the cross, so with the same ardent love for sinners do I stand before God, my Father, since it is my most fervent wish that every sinner should do true penance, be converted to me and live. No one is so great a sinner that I do not completely forgive him all his sins if he does penance, and my heart turns to him with as much affection and gentleness, as though he had never sinned." — St. Bridget perceived some men to be in danger of losing their souls, but she was warned not to avoid them as if they were already condemned: "For if the man, who now is most ungodly, invokes me with contrition and a desire of amendment, I am ready to forgive him at once."

God is ready at any moment to take a penitent sinner back into His favor, and to doubt this is to question and limit His mercy, and so to diminish His glory.

Mary, the Mother of Mercy, is rightly called the Refuge of Sinners. During her earthly life she contributed to the redemption of mankind, and in the same way she participates in the final salvation of the redeemed. Her one supreme anxiety is lest her divine Son's precious Blood be shed in vain, in the case of even a single soul. Her loving heart turns especially towards dying sinners, because they are in danger of being for ever excluded from His presence. The sight of misery arouses charity; and who is so wretched as a sinner at the point of death, who is not in the state of grace? Every mother treats a sick child with peculiar love and care; how could our heavenly Mother leave unaided her children when they are sick in mind and body and exposed to the peril of temporal and eternal death? Their need is great, and speedy help is necessary, if they are not to perish.

Throughout the whole world Our Lady is invoked at the hour of death; she is mighty, kind, and faithful, she can and will help all who let themselves be helped. She, the Refuge of Sinners, reminds her Son of all that He did and suffered for them,

and implores Him, by His infinite love for sinners, to save them.

"However many sins a man may have committed," said Our Lady, according to St. Bridget, "as soon as he has recourse to me with heartfelt love and serious purpose of amendment, I am ready to intercede for him. I do not consider how much he has sinned, but with what disposition he returns to me. A sinner may be still despicable and stained, but I do not shrink from touching, anointing and curing his wounds; since I am in very truth what I am called, — the Mother of Mercy."

How many of the saints owe their admission to heaven chiefly to her who is the Cause of our Joy! St. Catherine represents Almighty God as saying: "Of my goodness, on account of the reverence due to the Incarnate Word, the privilege has been bestowed on Mary, the glorious Mother of my Son, that every sinner, who with genuine veneration has recourse to her, shall not be dragged down by the fiend to hell."

> There my sight failed, and with it utterance too
> Ceased with the name of Mary, and I fell,
> And my corpse lifeless lay exposed to view.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> God's angel took me, and Hell's loudly cried:
> "Why robb'st thou me, thou, who in heaven dost dwell?
> Thou bear'st the part that ever shall abide
> For one poor tear that cheats me of my prize."
>
> DANTE, *Purgatory*, V, 100.

However, it is important to mention that in many books stories are told that ascribe to the Blessed Virgin an altogether undignified part, and encourage presumptuous confidence in her.

There is no doubt that each man's guardian angel will, at the last moment, try every means of bringing him back to the right way. For the attainment of this end all the angels and saints will pray, since they rejoice over a sinner doing penance, more than over ninety and nine just persons, who need not conversion.

The Church is the spiritual mother of all the faithful; she couples severity with gentleness, that she may train her children for heaven; she begs and admonishes, threatens and punishes; she withdraws her means of grace from hardened sinners and excludes them from her communion; but when they are in danger of death, she again stretches out her hand to them, and lavishly offers them the whole of the treasures of grace and merit entrusted to her. Bountiful are the privileges that she

grants to the dying. In case of necessity any priest, even though he himself be an excommunicate, has authority to pronounce absolution of all sins and ecclesiastical penalties without exception. Even persons who have not led a Christian life may receive conditional absolution, though they may be unconscious and unable to give any sign of contrition. It is probably a correct opinion that this applies also to those who lost consciousness, whilst actually committing a sin, such as fighting a duel, stealing, etc. The reason for this is that even they may possibly be able, in a moment of consciousness, to wish for reconciliation with God, and to express this desire by an inward prayer for mercy.

Moreover, what constitutes in God's sight the essence of sin and determines the measure of its guilt and punishment is not so much the actual sin, as the underlying intention and disposition. As a rule the numerous mitigating or aggravating circumstances that attend a sin are hidden from the eyes of men, but before God the complicated history of each sin is plain to view, like an open book; He alone can weigh good and evil acts, and often He will judge leniently one whom the world has condemned.

Catholic burial is refused to apostates, heretics, excommunicated persons, suicides, those who despise the sacraments and notorious sinners, if before death they give no sign of repentance. This does not by any means imply that the Church expresses an opinion regarding their ultimate fate. She neither can nor will judge the dead, but from motives of self-respect and for the maintenance of discipline she must refuse Christian burial to sinners who have flagrantly transgressed the rules of the Church and of society, and have died without any public expression of repentance. Her severe action in this respect is demanded by the nefarious example set by such persons.

In this connection it may be well to mention here that the ancients refused last honors to criminals guilty of offences that involved infamy (atimy). According to both Greek and Roman law this penalty was imposed on suicides, although many philosophers maintained self-destruction to be a morally indifferent action, indeed, under certain circumstances, advisable and good. Committing suicide without official permission, however, was regarded as an offence against society, and was

made punishable by deprivation of all funeral ceremonies. According to pagan views this was a particularly severe penalty, for whoever failed to receive honorable burial was disgraced for ever in the eyes of his contemporaries and of posterity, nor could he find rest beyond the grave.

What consolation may be offered to the kindred of one who has committed suicide? So great is the love of life and the fear of death, innate in every human being, that suicide is one of the most glaring contradictions and inexplicable aberrations of which human nature is capable; it is a crime almost incomprehensible to any sane Christian. Desperate indeed must be the state of one who resolves upon such a deed! How deeply must the deceitful doctrines of materialists and pessimists have infected and obscured his mind! Violent passions must have benumbed his heart, or utmost destitution and blackest gloom his mind, before a craven resolve such as this could be taken, before one could lay hands upon himself, and commit this shameful crime against the Lord of life and death, his own family, society, and himself. Protracted suffering, business disaster, incessant worry and adversity may deprive even a good, religious man of all energy, and make him wish for death, but unless mental infirmity destroys his sound judgment and sense, or his faith, he will struggle against despair, and not become his own murderer. Job was afflicted with every imaginable form of suffering, both mental and physical, and was the victim of such melancholy and distaste of life that he cried, "My soul rather chooseth hanging, and my bones death; I have done with hope; I shall now live no longer" (Job vii. 15, 16). But the hour of depression passed, and with manly courage Job conquered his temptation, and continued to bear his burden. The Greek hero, Odysseus, the Job of classical literature, puts to shame the effeminate weaklings of modern paganism, who by voluntary self-destruction seek an escape from the troubles of this life. Those who dare to extol suicide as a mark of courage, and strength of mind, are put to shame by pagan poets and philosophers. Only a wicked distortion and perversion of mind due to spurious wisdom can make any one praise a cowardly, mean flight from the sufferings of life as an heroic action. Shakespeare represents Brutus as saying:

I do find it cowardly and vile,
For fear of what might fall, so to prevent
The time of life.
Jul. Caes., Act. V, 2.

If non-Christians fall into this error we must judge them leniently, since they have an excuse for their ignorance in questions of morality and religion and are incapable of solving the problem of evil. Modern advocates of suicide base their opinions upon arguments that are as a rule below the level of pagan morality. Eugene Dühring asserts with childish impertinence that only the priests of the religion of enslavement have branded death by one's own hand as a sin. "Moralists," he says, "have mostly been weak enough to echo respectfully the prejudices implanted in the nations by the priests' anathema, as if they might still question a man's right to dispose of his own life." In his bitter hatred of the priesthood the author ignores the fact that even among pagans many writers maintained that man has to render a strict account to God, the Lord of life and death, for the use he has made of his life, and that he has no right to take the law into his own hands.

No less important is it to observe that even pagans were inclined to regard suicide as a mark of mental aberration, inflicted upon man as a punishment for a wicked life. In this sense Homer speaks of Epicaste, who strangled herself in the bewilderment and despair into which she was cast at the instigation of the gods. "Whomsoever God wishes to destroy, He strikes with madness" is a saying that involuntarily we remember in discussing this subject. Aristotle is right when he says that people who have committed many grievous crimes seek death in order to escape thus their own inward wretchedness, as well as the hatred and scorn of their fellow men.

Statistics show that suicide is now very common; its frequency is no doubt due to the conditions of modern life and education; it is one of the appalling results of a false idea of culture and of a view of life that is in itself sensual, and is a continual incitement to sensuality. The tendency of the present day, which affects the thoughts and actions of large sections of the community, impels men to alternate between passionate cravings and their unholy gratification; it awakens hopes and leads to disappointments, affords no food to the mind and no peace to the heart; in the midst of enjoyment it produces distaste for

existence, weakens the better impulses, hinders all desire for supernatural and eternal possessions, obscures the moral consciousness, banishes wholesome fear of retribution beyond the grave, destroys faith, lets loose violent passions, and encourages detestable vices with their, in many cases, hideous consequences. Whoever falls into this evil state, and seeks no help from heaven, nor expects any from the world, turns to poison or pistol as the only means of escape from unbearable disgrace and distress. Thoughts of suicide are the blossoms of the tree of vice. Masaryk says, "Almost every suicide, as we may see from its causes, has been prepared long before, and therefore we must look upon it as the end of a long development, and acknowledge that those who kill themselves are, with few exceptions, immoral." This immorality takes the form finally of despair, which as a rule is the result of irreligion and of a vicious life. In contrast, moreover, to the worldly principles and ethics of modern free-thinkers, the masses still regard suicide as the crowning atrocity of a guilty and wasted life.

Nevertheless, no one has the right to judge or condemn an individual suicide. "Never judge, O man, until the day brings everything to light," is the warning of the Chorus in Sophocles. "Who art thou," asks the apostle, "that judgest another man's servant? To his own lord he standeth or falleth" (Rom. xiv. 4); even when he appears unsummoned before the judgment seat. We do not know the degree of responsibility that the unhappy person possessed when he committed his terrible crime, nor how far he is guilty. The errors of the best and most respected pagan philosophers teach us that even earnest men, not only in moments of violent emotion, but also at times of tranquil reflection, made grave mistakes regarding the morality of suicide.

Seneca believed in divine Providence, and considered that the obstacles and difficulties of earthly life should be a stimulus to increased moral energy, and yet he advocated suicide, with only occasional limitations. Lehmkuhl says, "We may readily admit that the unlawfulness of taking one's own life in certain very painful circumstances is not so obvious that conscientious persons might not guiltlessly err on the subject." One who studies the matter in the light of the doctrines and ethical standards of Christianity cannot, of course, for a moment doubt the unlaw-

fulness of suicide. There are, however, adverse circumstances in life and sudden blows of ill fortune that are like black clouds concealing that light; violent excitement or persistent melancholy obscures the eye of the mind, confuses moral consciousness, and drives the will to a decision which it would reject with horror as most sinful if dispassionate consideration were possible. When we stand aloof and criticize a case of suicide, we are apt to be misled in our judgment of the real motives that led to it, because the despair of the suicide touches no sympathetic chord in our own feelings, which are dominated by the love of life and a sense of duty. We do not know what thoughts passed through his mind; his difficulties and trials may not seem to us so grave as to leave room for a charitable construction of his rash act, but he himself was blinded, whether by his own fault or not, and thought the outlook so hopeless that, rather than face it, he preferred to put an end to his life. Statistics set down among causes of suicide many things which we cannot help calling trivial and contemptible; but we are unable to decide, in any individual case, whether circumstances that an ordinary will could withstand and overcome may not have caused some mental disturbance, rendering the mind incapable of sound, moral judgment.

Even if a man with apparently calm determination and after reflection commits suicide, in order, perhaps, to escape shame and imprisonment, or to avoid incurable suffering, we still do not know whether God's voice may not have made itself heard within him after his hand had dealt the fatal blow, and whether, in his last moments, the voice may not have aroused his contrition, so that he offered the agony of his self-inflicted death in expiation for his crime. Perhaps in the last turmoil of mental anguish, when his eyes seemed to see God's angry glance, and his ears to hear the thundering voice of his Judge, when his dying heart was about to sink for ever into the ocean of tribulation, he may have looked up to the gentle star that still illumined the darkness of his soul; he may have prayed with confidence, seizing, as it were, the plank thrown to him, and thus have reached the shore. In cases such as this salvation is still possible, though not without long and severe purgation.

Perfect contrition possesses infallible power to obliterate sin, and there is no lack of motives for it. The strongest and most

obvious are derived from the consideration of God's boundless love of sinners. God loved us first, and loved us with an everlasting love, never ceasing to give us evidence of it. If we feel genuine sorrow and abhorrence for the black ingratitude shown in our failure to love our heavenly Father and His only begotten Son, — if we are ashamed of having insulted Him, and try to awaken a sense of thankfulness and love to Him in our hearts, this is a degree of perfect contrition. It may be possible for a person who dies suddenly to accomplish this; in any case the necessary grace is not lacking. Let us, therefore, commend his poor soul frequently and confidently to God's mercy, for, after all, he was God's child and creature. Gloomy speculation will never deliver a troubled heart from torturing doubt, it will rather aggravate the pain; on the other hand humble, submissive, confident, and persistent prayer affords the best means of consolation for both, the departed and the survivors.

A venerable old priest, Canon Anton Kerschbaumer, whose father committed suicide on account of fancied debts, writes as follows: "A gloomy shadow was cast upon my soul by the sudden death of my father, and it has saddened my whole pilgrimage through life. During my childhood I did not, it is true, give it much thought, but I reflected on it incessantly after I became a priest. Although I was in no way to blame for my father's sin, I was impelled to take upon myself a share of his guilt, and to look upon my life as an expiatory sacrifice. This tragic thought, which no one suspected, and which I was unable to put into words, caused me many sad hours, but also much consolation. Now that I am at the end of my pilgrimage I cannot keep silent, because, if I speak, my whole life and character will become more comprehensible. November 9, the anniversary of my father's death, has always been a sad day for me, and I rejoiced when that day of unhappy memories was over. It cut me to the heart whenever harsh judgments on suicides were uttered in my hearing. I thought within myself: 'Who knows what a fearful mental struggle is undergone by one who takes his own life? Condemn him not, but pray for him; it is for God to judge.' I applied the merits of all my good works to my father's soul, and amidst all the trials of my parochial work, when waiting in the confessional, when setting out to administer the last sacraments, when sub-

jected to insults and overcome with fatigue, I thought: 'May my sacrifices benefit my father's soul!' In course of time I acquired more peace of mind, though the sting remained. God gave me the grace to influence with success persons thinking of suicide; I remember four cases in which I succeeded in averting it."

Those, therefore, whose anxiety regarding either their own salvation or that of others overshadows their hope of a happy meeting in the life to come, should not forget that it is a filial, not a slavish, fear which is pleasing in God's sight, and they should remember that the sweetness of His boundless mercy is never wholly lacking in the bitter draught prepared by His justice. St. Francis of Sales, that saint of gentleness, says: "A man who stops short at distrust and fear, and does not go on to hope and confidence, is like one who plucks from a briar the thorns and not the roses. We must act like a surgeon, who never opens a vein unless he has bandages ready to check the bleeding. He who trusts in God, will be as Mount Sion, unmoved by any storm."

CHAPTER XVIII

IT IS EXPEDIENT TO YOU THAT I GO

Only the dead hearts forsake us never;
Death's last kiss has been the mystic sign
Consecrating Love our own for ever,
Crowning it eternal and divine.

So when Fate would fain besiege our city,
Dim our gold, or make our flowers fall;
Death, the Angel, comes in love and pity,
And to save our treasures, claims them all.

ADELAIDE A. PROCTER: *Our Dead.*

WHEN a melody is interrupted, we involuntarily seek the completion of the phrase without thinking why a conclusion is necessary, because some incomprehensible but irresistible force impels us to satisfy a craving that has been begun in us. In the same way the painful sense of the chasm between our earthly existence and the purpose of this existence makes our mind eager to pass beyond the narrow limitations of our present life. This impulse is apt to be impeded by the burden of temporal cares, and so it is well that from time to time our minds should be raised to their proper pitch by the touch of God's own hand.

Whenever death carries off one whom we love, there is one bond less attaching us to earth, and one more drawing us to heaven. In writing to his sister, Bishop von Ketteler says: "We cannot help regarding a friend's death in this light. Earth seems to us emptier, and heaven more replete with beloved forms; the latter draws nearer, the former grows more remote. To me at least earth has a value only because so many friends still dwell there." The older we become, the more worthless does life appear, and finally nothing is left but our dear dead, and our own death, which will restore them to us when no other power can reunite us.

The consoling hope of meeting our friends again should not

only alleviate our grief, but raise our eyes and hearts to the heights where those dwell who have gone before us in the faith, and who now remember us in prayer and await us in love. We should incur their displeasure if we mourned them merely for earthly reasons. Whilst we soothe the agony of our hearts at their loss, we should at the same time look forward with longing to the land that is promised to us also, and fill our minds with heavenly thoughts and desires.

When the apostles and disciples learnt from their beloved Master that He was about to leave them, they were plunged into such dejection and alarm as hardly to hear or understand the words of comfort that followed the mournful tidings. They did not question their Lord as to the place whither He was going, or the glory that would soon be His; they thought of nothing but the fact that they would be without Him. They were so much accustomed to be with Jesus, and felt so intensely their dependence on His bodily presence, that they believed themselves incapable of bearing the loss of this priceless benefit. Hitherto they had trusted implicitly to His guidance; in His company they found all that they needed, and now they were to be separated from Him. "What will become of us?" they asked; "who will in future provide for and protect us? who will teach, guide, counsel and help us? What shall we do without Him, who has been our one hope and love, our sole protection and comfort? We shall be children without a father, pupils without a teacher, sheep without a shepherd."

It was not only the sense of abandonment that filled the apostles' stricken hearts with anxiety and sorrow; they were also most bitterly disappointed. They believed in Christ as the Son of God, but they seem not to have understood His exalted teaching. They trusted in Him as the true Messiah, but they had a mistaken idea of His kingdom. They loved Him as their Friend and Benefactor, but they were still far removed from the genuine love of God. All their thoughts, aims, and hopes were centred on this world; they pictured the greatness and splendor of an earthly Messianic kingdom, where they were to reign with their beloved Master. Although He had often corrected their foolish opinions they still persisted in them, and even distributed among themselves beforehand the honors and offices of the kingdom. Our Lord's solemn farewell discourse

shattered all these hopes and put an end, once for all, to their cherished dreams and ambitions.

Thinking less of their Master than of themselves, they found no consolation in the reflection that He was on the point of returning to His heavenly Father. He had pity on their weakness, and being Himself deeply affected by the sorrow of parting, He uttered words easily intelligible to His sorrowing friends: "It is expedient to you that I go." "If your love for me is true and genuine, it will accompany me to my Father's house, and seek its gratification in heaven, not on earth. You weep because I am going home; if you wish to see me again and enjoy my company, you must lift up your eyes and hearts, and fix them on things above. It is there that my kingdom, and your home, is to be found; I go to prepare a place for you, where I may always delight you with my presence and share with you my happiness. The void caused in your hearts by my death must be filled with real love of God; the severance of the earthly bond between us plunges you into loneliness and grief, but it is intended to render you susceptible to the inspirations of the heavenly Paraclete, whom I will send you."

When one whom we love is suffering intense pain, we may sometimes pray that God may soon release him from his agony, but, ordinarily, we are so much occupied with the thought of ourselves as to be incapable of acquiescing in separation from him, and we do not even think of the heavenly joy that awaits him. A dying man who is passing away in the grace of God may well tell his friends: "It is expedient for you that I go. Perhaps you perceive as little as I do that God does all things well, and considers the real good of all who love Him; I shall realize it soon, and so will you in course of time."

"In the next life we shall see clearly what is hidden from us now," says Fénélon. "We shall then sing songs of joy and of thanksgiving for events that now draw tears from us. In the present state of darkness we recognize neither what is really good nor what is really evil. If God always did what pleases us, He would ruin us utterly. He saves us all when He tears asunder the bonds of affection and makes us cry aloud in our sorrow. If it is true that faith and charity constitute Christian perfection, are we permitted to weep because God loves us more than we know how to love ourselves? Are we to com-

plain when He removes those dear to us from temptation and sin? Does He wrong us by cutting short the days of their misery, struggles, sin, and temptation? What is it that we desire? Longer peril and greater temptations, to which even the elect would, if it were possible, succumb? We want that which flatters our self-love, so that we may forget that we are in the land of exile. God wrests the poison from us, and we cry like the infant whose mother has snatched away a sharp knife before the child has had time to hurt itself."

God loves us even when He smites us and wounds our earthly affections most deeply. A due appreciation of this fact will be one of the great joys attending our meeting in the life to come.

Sometimes the death angel is sent to test the faith and confidence of God's children, and to prepare them for fresh proofs of His favor. Whoever is guided by this knowledge must not fail even in the darkest hour to bow to God's decree, and to accept with contentment whatever befalls him, being sure that some day all will be explained. Such unconditional submission to God's will sustained Job's patience, even when he suffered the loss of all his children, and it produced in the great ancestor of the chosen people a greatness of soul that overpowered all natural feelings. On the day when Abram was called God made him a promise, saying, "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and magnify thy name" (Gen. xii. 2). Ten years later the patriarch was still childless, and he complained, "Lord God, what wilt Thou give me? I shall go without children." And God replied, "Look up to heaven, and number the stars, if thou canst; so shall thy seed be" (Gen. xv. 2, 5); and Abraham believed. Subsequently God renewed the promise and foretold that Sara should bear a son. Abraham fell on his face, laughing for joy and amazement, and saying in his heart, "Shall a son be born to him that is a hundred years old? and shall Sara, that is ninety years old, bring forth?" (Gen. xvii. 17). The patriarch's faith was at last rewarded by the birth of Isaac, but a fresh trial, the hardest of all, followed in due course. God called His faithful servant and said, "Take thy only-begotten son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and go into the land of vision; and there thou shalt offer him for an holocaust upon one of the mountains which I will show thee" (Gen.

xxii. 2). What does the father say, stunned as he is by horror and pain? Does he exclaim: "Is it possible, O Lord, that Thou demandest so fearful a thing of me? After years of earnest desire Thou madest me a father; was it to constrain me to murder my own son? Would that Thou hadst never given him to me, rather than take him from me thus! How can I look for the fulfilment of Thy promise to make my name great and my seed numerous as the stars of heaven? How can the stem of my race live and grow, if Thou destroyest the root? All depends upon this, my only child, my hope and my delight. If he, the child of Thy promise and the heir of Thy blessing, is to die, why dost Thou bid me commit an unnatural act and kill him with my own hand? Thou knowest what fatherly love is, for Thou hast implanted it in my heart; it was Thou who didst fashion the bond that binds me to my Isaac more closely than I have power to tell. How can I, a father, slay my son? Take him from me with Thine own hand, or if none other may offer Thee the sacrifice save me, make me forget that he is mine. A thousand times rather would I thrust the knife into my own breast than into his. How can I endure to live on, after I have slain him? O Father in heaven, pity the heart of a father, that is now ready to break with sorrow."—No, Abraham did not answer thus; he offered no resistance, he did not argue, or weep, or beg for mercy, or delay. We read that he rose up early in the morning and did everything required of him. What wonderful obedience, to accept the sacrifice demanded and not to ask for reasons! How intense must Abraham's sufferings have been during his three days' journey with Isaac to Mount Moria! On their arrival, he did not give way to any tears or lamentations, but bade his servants remain behind, whilst he and his son went up the hill to pray. He loaded the wood for the holocaust upon Isaac's shoulders, and they ascended the hill together; on the summit he bound the boy, and laid him on the altar, and then he took the knife to sacrifice him. But an angel from heaven stopped him before he could deal the fatal blow, and, as a reward for his obedience, the son, whom he had sacrificed in intention, though not in fact, was restored to him unscathed.

"God laid upon him this command," says St. John Chrysostom, "not because He desired bloodshed, but in order to make

the name of this heroic patriarch famous throughout the world, and by means of his example to teach all men that His laws are more important than all else besides, supreme above the love of children and the voice of nature."

This great trial was to Abraham the source of abundant blessings; God solemnly confirmed His previous promises and proceeded to fulfil them.

The birth of a child is a blessing to parents, but its death is often a still greater blessing — the former fact is readily admitted, not, however, the latter. Yet it is not unreasonable to think that God deprives parents of a child, frequently the first-born, to give them an opportunity of proving their confidence and loyalty, and thus of becoming worthy to receive other blessings. The God who can raise up children to Abraham out of stones has power to compensate bereaved parents for their loss.

In the first Book of Kings we read of the sorrow felt by Elcana's wife, Anna, because she had no children, when childlessness was regarded as a punishment and disgrace. She made a pilgrimage to Silo, where the Tabernacle was, and, having her heart full of grief, she prayed to the Lord, shedding many tears, and she made a vow that, provided she bore a son, he should be dedicated to God's service. Her prayer was heard, and she gave birth to a son, whom she named Samuel. No sooner had she weaned him than she kept her word, and carried him to Silo, where she offered him to Heli, to be consecrated to the service of God for ever. Heli blessed Elcana, and said, "The Lord give thee seed of this woman, for the loan thou hast lent to the Lord." God gave the mother a rich reward for her sacrifice, and she bore three other sons and two daughters (1 Kings ii. 20). Parents who have given up a child to serve in the sanctuary of heaven in the presence of God know how to find consolation for their loss, even though they may have no prospect of compensation in this world.

Separation by death has great power to purify, ennoble, and consecrate earthly love. This purification is necessary, but often very painful.

We see parents rejoicing in the possession of healthy children. Suddenly the angel of death appears and plucks the fairest blossom. In their sorrow the parents ask why this should be; why life, just begun, should be so quickly destroyed. Silently does

God's messenger withdraw, carrying with him the child who was the hope and joy of the household; sometimes even he threatens to come back and fetch the children that are left.

St. Gregory of Nyssa is of the opinion that God often calls children away in order to punish and cure the vanity and greed of their parents. Sometimes parents cling with inordinate affection to their children, sometimes in their anxiety for temporal prosperity they neglect their spiritual welfare, and thus centre their interests upon this world rather than the next, aiming only at securing for their children a brilliant position, wealth, enjoyment, and for themselves a high and lasting reputation. The first duty of parents is invariably to train their children for heaven, and this duty is not incompatible with that of promoting their temporal good.

If our heavenly Father sees that parents are neglecting the most important and beautiful part of their calling, can we wonder that He makes use of His unlimited paternal rights, and deposes His representatives in this world from the exalted office which they have discharged so badly? By doing so He benefits the children by taking them under His own charge, and, also, He reminds the parents of their duty.

The death of a child on whom they have lavished a blind and weak affection should open their eyes and show them that God acts mercifully in chastising them. Being now free from the vain cares that they had imposed upon themselves, and from the burden of responsibility that they could not properly discharge, they can advance unhindered along the path which leads them ultimately to their darling.

The death of a child puts an end to the extravagances of worldly existence, dispels vain dreams of earthly greatness and temporal prosperity, banishes all the proud hopes and anticipations that failed to rise above the level of this life, and breaks the bonds defiled by avarice and undue ambition. Death calls the heirs of earth to their heavenly heritage, renders futile all eagerness to obtain wealth, and removes the greatest obstacle to the reign of charity towards God and man.

In a discourse on the subject of the rich young man, St. Augustine refutes the subterfuges of avarice, and takes advantage of the opportunity to utter truths that to worldly people must sound like words from another sphere. Regarding our

present topic the holy Bishop says: "By death a child is taken from you, or rather made secure for all eternity; he has not forsaken you, but gone on in advance. Now I intend to say something that probably no one will venture to contradict. Is the child still alive? Consult your faith. If he lives, how may his brothers and sisters enjoy his inheritance? — You will reply that he cannot come back to claim it. No, but it ought to be sent after him. The child himself has no need of his earthly inheritance, but God, who has become his portion, requires it here on earth; He desires to receive here below what He will pay out above. Therefore plead not in excuse that you have to provide for your other children, and must not diminish their inheritance; you are diminishing that of the child who is dead, and you have no right to do this. Consequently I do not say: 'Give what is yours,' but 'Pay what you owe.'" — The holy Bishop goes on to say that Christ ought to be reckoned as a member of every family, for those whom He recognizes as His co-heirs in heaven should acknowledge Him as their co-heir on earth. He has made over His portion to the poor, and, where circumstances allow, they ought to receive the dead child's share of the property. On the great day when all meet again the child will ask what has been done with his portion, and those who have disinherited him will be overwhelmed with shame. In many religious houses it is the custom to leave the seat of a religious who has died vacant for some time, and the food that would be served at that place is given to the poor.

The last farewell is a solemn admonition to recover lost faith and charity.

Many and various are the ways in which God pursues His own; and the grief caused by the death of dear friends has great and decisive significance in the history of many conversions, in fact it often seems to be the last and most successful means that God employs in order to bring the erring back to the way of salvation. When all His invitations, counsels, and warnings have failed to make any impression upon an impenitent sinner, He often allows him to feel His full power, and shakes him out of his indifference by the remembrance of death; at the same time making appeal to the strongest impulses of his nature in order to inspire him with better dispositions. Love is stronger than death, and the more ardent and true love is, the more

earnestly does it long for reunion with those whom death has carried away. The survivor feels so lonely and forsaken that the thought of never meeting them again is unbearable. Though he may have made shipwreck of his faith, his sorrow teaches him to believe again in that land of promise whither his dear ones have gone before him. To renounce all hope of seeing them again is impossible. Though he may have fallen into sin and vice, he now turns his thoughts towards heaven, where they dwell. He longs to meet them once more, cost what it may.

Nicolas dedicated his *Philosophical Studies* to one in doubt, and says of him: "A friend, most closely united to me, lost his only child by death. It seems to me that this misfortune made him reflect, so that he returned to his religion, and desired more than ever to find therein the truth. He begged me for a solution of his difficulties."

We read of Radbot, a pagan king of the Frisians, that he was already standing in the river, ready to be baptized, when he asked the missionary, "Where are my ancestors and kinsfolk? in heaven or in hell." When he received the uncharitable reply, "Of course they are in hell," he sprang on to the riverbank exclaiming, "Then I prefer to join those whom I love," so strong was his desire for reunion with them. In a Christian the longing for reunion with his friends is no less strong, but in his case this longing is not an obstacle to virtue, but rather an aid and a support.

It is often necessary for one pair of eyes to close in death that another pair may be opened. The still features and silent lips of the dead often accomplish what his tears and prayers during life failed to effect. The sight of a beloved one lying dead is a sermon to which we cannot turn a deaf ear.

It may be that the survivor is an unscrupulous father, an unloving husband, a wayward son, an unkind brother, or a faithless friend. The supplications of the one whose heart he has broken had no power to touch him, and it is not until he is standing before the dead body that he returns to his senses. Gladly indeed would he make reparation, but now it is too late. One thing, however, is still possible; he can visit the last resting-place and ask forgiveness, promising by way of expiation to begin a new life. He is loath to meet still burdened with shame and guilt the deceased in the other life, when in this world he

has heaped sorrow and abuse upon him or her. Hence he determines that the one he wronged shall at least have the satisfaction of receiving with open arms a sinner contrite and saved. The present separation is torture to his guilty soul, which endures it as a chastisement for its transgressions. Thus grace consecrates and blesses his natural grief, so that tears of contrition and sorrow are intermingled, and his longing for his dear one is mixed with a desire to reach the home destined for the truly penitent.

The prospect of meeting again hereafter must be a reason for fear to children who have thoughtlessly broken their solemn promises made to dying parents, or disregarded their last instructions, or disturbed the silence of death by unseemly disputes concerning property, and are not ashamed to bring disgrace upon the memory of the departed.

Death should bind the survivors more closely together, and it is a terrible spectacle when it raises a barrier of greed and envy between members of the same family, when the pain of separation gives place to sentiment of discord and strife, and the quiet grave becomes a gulf separating persons of the same blood.

The thought of meeting in the life to come may well disquiet those who fail in their duty towards the dead. It is not enough to pay the last honors to the dead body; it is far more important to pray earnestly for the departed soul, and to assist it by good works and supplications.

Death should be a peacemaker. Only life hates, death reconciles. Many a man is never appreciated at his true value until he has passed away. During life he has perhaps been a stumbling-block to many, an object of their dislike, jealousy, or envy; but the messenger of peace takes him away from the venomous tongues and glaring looks of his critics, who then have no further reason for speaking evil of him; without prejudice to themselves they may at last be fair to him. Hence they may now regret and reverse their rash judgment, and love him whom hitherto they have hated. Whoever is unwilling to restore to the dead the withdrawn love and the despoiled reputation must indeed shrink from seeing them again, and still more reason will he have for this if he slandered them after their death. One who acts thus is, according to St. Francis of Sales, like a

wild beast that digs up dead bones from the earth to viciously gnaw them.

Again, a meeting in the next life must be dreaded by all who are so selfish as to make themselves the centre of all their thoughts, actions, and endeavors, who care for nobody, assist, console, and cheer nobody, and treat with malice the very people whom they are most bound to help.

On the last great day all will shun those who have oppressed the poor, widows and orphans, all unjust persons, persecutors, seducers of the innocent, false friends and malicious foes, unless, indeed, they have found grace ere it was too late. No Christian must shrink in horror from the thought of meeting in heaven sinners who are saved, even though they may have been his personal enemies in this life, and may have done him much wrong. Expressions such as, "I should not care to be with such a wretch even in heaven," proceed from a heart inflamed with lust of revenge; and to begrudge any one eternal salvation is possible only to the victim of truly diabolical envy. If God, who is all holy, admits any person to heaven, that person also is holy, and washed clean in the Blood of the Lamb. Being God's friend, he is the friend also of all the saints, and is worthy of their affection. If one now dead has wronged and injured us in the past, we ought to forgive him from our hearts, and pray that God may forgive him, and remit, if possible, the temporal punishment still due to his offences. We are the better able to do this because the death of the wrongdoer will make us so disposed, for death is a powerful peacemaker and quenches the flames of our wrath. Moreover we are happily so constituted that pleasant impressions dwell longest in our memory, and unpleasant ones are as a rule quickly obliterated. Consequently, when we recall some one who is dead, it is comparatively easy for us to judge him more favorably than we might have done during his lifetime. We no longer criticize him with cold severity, but are apt to expatiate upon his good qualities. We judge him fairly, and not from the point of view of our own selfishness, and thus we effect an easy reconciliation.

The prospect of reunion with the dead cannot afford gratification to those who have bound themselves to others by ties of marriage or friendship simply from motives of ambition, greed,

or sensuality. Our Lord's words to the Sadducees, "You err, not knowing the scriptures" (Matth. xxii. 29), apply to all who reckon upon the permanence of purely earthly and material relations. All that is earthly will pass away, unless it bears at the same time the stamp of heaven. Connections formed solely for the sake of the world and its advantages, or for the body and its enjoyment, being devoid of all higher consecration, will end as soon as their immediate object is attained. They will vanish with the vain honors, perishable riches, and fleeting joys of this life, and their brief existence will terminate in the stream of time. Marriage engagements formed for the sake of mutual development of heart and mind, and with a view to progress in virtue, are more permanent. When the minds of two persons are united in similarity of thought and will, hope and desire, labor and aim, and tend alike to what is exalted and imperishable, — then the bond between them is ratified before God's eternal throne, and cannot be severed by death.

Those who share the same home, sit at the same table, and bear the same name, are united as brethren, and so are all who are one in faith, hope, and charity, in Christian work and conflict, in endurance and sacrifice; between them there is a spiritual bond, lasting for all eternity. When one prospers, all rejoice; when one suffers, all are sorry. Those united thus will find one another again in a furnace of light and love that welds men's hearts together.

Therefore that meeting in the world to come may be awaited with joy by all who hate injustice and love justice, who are well-disposed towards all mankind, whose hearts are full of pity and love for their neighbors, who quietly dry the tears of the poor and soothe the sick, who honor the memory of the departed, carry out their desires, continue their good works, make good their failures, and bear the loss of dear friends as these would have them do.

The prospect of reunion in the future should be a consolation to those who have been wounded by the poisonous darts of calumny or slander. The thought of the other life should enable them to bear up under unjust prejudice and harsh judgments, which are especially painful when entertained by persons we love. Some day the cloud of misunderstanding and the web of slanderous fictions will be dispersed. When the

mask of hypocritical sanctity is torn off, honesty, long despised and persecuted, will shine resplendent, and be recompensed an hundredfold for the insults endured in this life.

Whenever any one of our immediate circle passes away to our common home, we realize most vividly how closely all men are united. Our departed friend has gone on before, and sooner or later we shall follow him by the same road to the same goal. The beneficial influence that he exerted on those about him ought not to cease with his death, any more than the office that he held. His spirit, as well as his memory, must live on in his works, and these must be preserved to posterity, and in every age produce abundant blessings.

Another will fill the place made vacant by the death of this worthy man. Let his example spur his successor on to a zealous discharge of his duties. A son should do credit to his father, a pupil to his good teacher. Most of the benefits we enjoy have come to us from those who can no longer make claim upon our gratitude. Nevertheless we owe them thanks, because we can avail ourselves of their wealth of knowledge and experience and can profit by their achievements. If we let them live on in us with all their noble deeds and virtues, we confer upon them the worldly immortality that they deserve. With what shame should we meet them hereafter if we came with empty hands, having recklessly squandered what they toiled to gain, or if we merely benefited by the earthly fruits of their labor and cared nothing for the far more valuable spiritual advantages that they bequeathed to us. On the other hand, there is no better way of honoring the dead and at the same time of consoling ourselves for their loss, of rendering ourselves worthy to meet them again, and to participate in their unseen assistance, than to tread in their blessed footsteps and carry on their good works.

It is our task to find compensation and comfort for the loss of those dear to us in gladly accepting the heritage of their virtues; in zealously cultivating what they planted; in continuing the good work they began; in guarding what they acquired, and in completing what they left unfinished; in this way they will live again in us.

When a great man is called away from a life of beneficent activity thousands are ready to exclaim that he can never be replaced. His untimely death causes at first discouragement

and despondency; but soon it gives rise to new life and energy. Great men are made by the graveside of other great men; for there they receive the impetus to heroic decisions and glorious deeds; there they hear words of consolation and admonition from the other world; and they feel that they, too, are capable of achieving what their predecessors have achieved. The more irreparable the loss appears, and the greater the resulting despondency, the more complete in many cases is the compensation supplied, and in this way the noblest men among us often effect more by their death than they could have effected had their earthly life been prolonged. No sooner had they given back their spirit to their Creator than hundreds, inspired by them, came forward, anxious to inherit their virtues and emulate their good works. Thousands shared in the benefits they had bestowed; there was plenty for all, and none went away empty-handed.

In a letter to Passavant, dated December 19, 1845, Melchior von Diepenbrock wrote as follows, shortly after his elevation to the episcopal see of Breslau: "More than ever do I now enjoy spiritual intercourse with the departed Sailer, and I ask him or myself his opinion on this or that subject, and how he would have acted. This often affords me great enlightenment."

We ought to think of the future meeting when tempted to stray from the path that leads us to the place whither the dear dead have gone before. There is a saying, that the soil trodden by a good man is sacred; let us never desecrate the places where our friends once dwelt, lest we fear to meet them again. Let us resolve to walk as if in the presence of those who strove to restrain us from evil and to incite us to good. A Chinese sage admonished his disciples that they should "walk in the sight of the dead." We owe them the same love and reverence after death as during life. Let us take our place on the deck of the ship that bears us over the stormy sea of life, so that we may not lose sight of the lighthouse of the haven where so many of our kinsfolk and friends have entered before us. The mother of the Machabees bade her youngest son look up to heaven. Heaven is our native land and our home; we are destined to dwell in the house of God with Him who said, "'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Matth. v. 5). How can we, while in exile, forget our home and our Father's

house? Let us always remember it, and aim at what is above, forming no connections but such as are worthy to last for ever, and contracting no obligations but such of which the departed would approve.

With indescribable pleasure and satisfaction do the blessed look down from the height of heaven upon their brethren and descendants, who are still engaged in the conflict, and following in their footsteps.

If we could invite them to return to this life they would refuse; they would not exchange their bodies, mouldering in the grave, for the most magnificent robes of royalty. The only way in which this world might have any attraction for them would be on account of the sufferings from which death released them. What we take on faith, this they now perceive by clear intuition, viz., that here on earth pain and renunciation constitute a Christian's aim and glory. They view all our varying fortunes in the light of eternity, and measure them by our heavenly Father's standard. They are, as we confidently hope, stones chosen for the completion of the heavenly Jerusalem; but, as all stones to be employed in this stately city must be hewn and chiselled so that they may acquire the shape and fine surface befitting their destination, our brethren in glory welcome on our behalf each sorrow that God in His wisdom sends us for our training. They are not, however, indifferent to the bitter grief caused in our hearts by our separation from them.

Scalpri salubris ictibus,
Et tunsione plurima,
Fabri polita malleo
Hanc saxa molem construunt,
Aptisque juncta nexibus
Locantur in fastigio.

Hymn *Caelestis urbs Jerusalem.*

When death threatens a relative or friend we should remember the future meeting, and this thought will make it easier for us to submit patiently to God's adorable will. Such submission, being based upon absolute confidence in God, has nothing in common with the dull apathy of the sluggard, who will not rouse himself to care, happen what may.

When someone obeys the king's summons we do not hold him back; and when one of our number is summoned to appear before the King of kings, we have no right to murmur. A

creditor does us no wrong when he asks us to return a loan; God has only lent our dear ones to us, and we must not complain when He claims His own property. A painter is master over his picture, and a potter over his pottery, but far greater is God's dominion over everything that lives. He takes back what He gave us, and will restore it to us after He has made it more beautiful.

God is our Father, "of whom all paternity in heaven and earth is named" (Ephes. iii. 15); He is "the Father of orphans and the Judge of widows" (Ps. lxvii. 6); He "giveth to beasts their food, and to the young ravens that call upon Him" (Ps. cxlvi. 19); "He feeds the birds of the air and clothes the lilies of the field" (Luke xii. 24, 27); He numbers the hairs of our heads, and He will surely not let man, made in His image, and loved by Him with an everlasting love, fall a victim to any evil accident. He giveth life and sendeth death; none can go beyond the hour that He has fixed, at the appointed time all must appear before Him. Those who trust in God fear no blind or treacherous fate; they are not too curious about the immediate causes of death, nor do they complain that the right physician has not been consulted, the right remedy not applied. They submit serenely to God's inexplicable decrees, knowing that He is their wise and merciful Father in heaven, who by depriving His children of human aid gives them the greater claim upon Himself.

An anxious mind is more susceptible to such considerations when the terrors of parting begin to give way to the consoling prospect of meeting again in the future. Soothed by this hope, a mourner may rise to the height reached by St. Francis of Sales when he wrote to St. Jane Frances of Chantal, on November 2, 1607: "We must not only be contented that God should chastise us, but that He should chastise us as it pleases Him. Lord Jesus, without any reserve or condition, without any exception or limitation, may Thy will be done in the case of my father, mother and daughter, in all things and in all places! I do not mean that we may not desire their preservation and pray for it, but that we must not say to God: Leave us this, and take away that."

Let us think of the happy meeting before us as the hour of death approaches. Each step brings us nearer the grave, but

nearer, too, to our goal, the end of our earthly pilgrimage. Time with its short-lived joys and fleeting sorrows will soon pass; let us await death as a friend and give him a hearty welcome. He will come to fetch us from a land of exile to our home, where we shall be with Christ and all those who have fallen asleep in Him.

. . .

In conclusion, we may revert once more to the thought that we shall meet again in heaven, which is the keynote of this book from beginning to end. This idea is deeply rooted in the human mind. Love is stronger than death. We look forward to seeing our dear ones again after death, because our life will end before our love. This thought of reunion is to people of the present day the strongest, and perhaps the only, stimulus to faith in the continued existence of the individual. We may find comfort in the belief that others will carry on to completion the work that we leave unfinished; but no one has ever yet comforted himself with the thought that others may continue and complete his love to one dear to him; he desires to do this himself. We never feel satisfied with our love, and if any one declared himself to be satisfied, he would have ceased to love. True love has no end, and it is for this reason we vow that it shall be everlasting. Love always hopes for further, higher aims; apparent satisfaction only makes us more conscious of fresh dissatisfaction. And if this were not so, every deep love is beset by countless external disturbances and obstacles, and the last and bitterest disturbance is death. More emphatically than in any other case does the death of those whom we love bring home to us the fact that we cannot finish our life on earth. With all the force of our imagination, intellect, and faith we strive to overcome this most painful barrier. Who will declare that he never hoped and loved in this sense? — only one who is incapable of love.

The thought of meeting again is indeed full of delight; it dispels the cold mists that hover over a grave, and allows a bright radiance to penetrate even the tomb, whilst it gives comfort to the aching heart and refreshing calm to the troubled mind. The pain of separation is alleviated, and to some extent

removed, by the consideration that our beloved dead can witness our labor, trials, difficulties, and sorrows. If we live continually in their sight, they are not wholly dead to us. We may fear that one or the other of them is detained for a time in purgatory, but still we can hope that either their guardian angel or our own will reveal to them what touches them so closely, viz., that we are praying and doing our utmost for their release. It is no meaningless phrase that we utter when we ask the dying to convey our greetings to those who have gone before. If we raise our eyes to the heights whence we, too, shall one day behold the life-work of our friends, even the last farewell loses much of its sadness. On the other hand, a belief that the dead behold our actions and observe our fulfilment of our promises to them cannot fail to influence one who is not wholly depraved. Our departed parents and friends take pleasure in our good works, and are grieved at our faults. No real mourner could bear to spurn the love of those who are dead, but would fain deserve to meet them again. "Man needs love from the dead longer than from the living, because we shall rest for ever there" (Soph. *Antigone*, 74).

In our true home above there are many of our kinsfolk, friends, benefactors, and acquaintances. Far be it from us to wish to bring them back into this vale of tears, into the gloomy darkness of uncertainty and sin. Our tears betoken merely our heartfelt love and longing, and they relieve the first agony of pain; soon our souls are filled with a quiet longing for our home above.

What a joy for us that you, dear souls, still live, and live for us, loving us, praying and caring for us, watching over and expecting us. When we leave this world you will come to meet us, with the heavenly hosts. Parents and children, husband and wife, brothers and sisters, friends and benefactors — all will meet again. May we all, through the mercy of God, join you in the bliss of our celestial home!

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